Happiness and Wisdom

Augustine's Early Theology of Education

Ryan N.S. Topping

Happiness and Wisdom

Ryan N. S. Topping

Happiness and Wisdom

Augustine's Early Theology of Education

The Catholic University of America Press
Washington, D.C.

Copyright © 2012
The Catholic University of America Press
All rights reserved
The paper used in this publication meets the minimum
requirements of American National Standards for
Information Science—Permanence of Paper for Printed
Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.
∞

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Topping, Ryan.
Happiness and wisdom : Augustine's early theology of education /
Ryan N.S. Topping.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-8132-1973-8 (cloth : alk. paper)
1. Augustine, Saint, Bishop of Hippo. 2. Education, Humanistic.
3. Education, Higher—Philosophy. I. Title.
LB125.A8T67 2012
370.1—dc23 2012004506

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments vii
Abbreviations ix

Introduction 1

1. Liberal Education prior to St. Augustine 19
2. Education in Augustine's Moral Theology 66
3. The Perils of Skepticism 95
4. The Liberal Arts Curriculum 126
5. Pedagogy and Liberal Learning 149
6. Authority and Illumination 185
7. The Purposes of Liberal Education 227

Selected Bibliography 233
Index 249

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of fellow Augustinian scholars offered advice, friendship, and good conversation over the duration of this writing, among whom I would like to thank the following: Oliver O'Donovan, Mark Edwards, Fr. David Meconi, S.J., Chad Gerber, Matthew Siebert, Michael Siebert, and Peter Burnell. Melissa Folan provided excellent editorial assistance in the final stages of revision. I wish to thank James Kruggel and the editorial staff at the Catholic University of America Press for their help and encouragement. Three anonymous readers offered many excellent suggestions; among them I thank Dr. Raymond Canning, who allowed his name to be known.

Chapter three of this book appeared in an earlier form as "The Perils of Skepticism: The Moral and Educational Argument of *Contra Academicos,*" in the *International Philosophical Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (September 2009): 333–50. Permission to reprint this material here is gratefully acknowledged.

Not least, mention should be made of the remarkable lady, my wife, Anna Domini Topping, who has fed, clothed, and kept our children in good order during so many years of extended paucity of body but not, I trust, of mind and heart.

This book is dedicated to my parents and grandparents.

ABBREVIATIONS

Titles of classical and patristic works are abbreviated according to the conventions of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary,* 3rd edition. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted. Citations to Augustine's works refer to the book, chapter, and, where necessary, paragraph number, as found within the relevant critical edition cited in the bibliography.

General Works

AD	*Augustine and the Disciplines: From Cassiciacum to Confessions,* eds. Karla Pollmann and Mark Vessey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)
AE	*Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia,* ed. A. Fitzgerald, O.S.B. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1999)
AugStud	*Augustinian Studies* (Villanova: Villanova University Press, 1970–)
AugLex	*Augustinus-Lexikon,* ed. C. Mayer (Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1986–)
BA	*Bibliothèque Augustinienne,* Oeuvres de Saint Augustin (Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, 1949–)
CCL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953–).

CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna: Tempsky, 1865–)
CHCL	*Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature,* ed. L.Ayres, F. Young, and A. Louth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)
FC	*The Fathers of the Church* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947–)
LCL	Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1912–)
PG	Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca (Paris 1857–66)

Works by St. Augustine

b. vita.	*De beata vita*
c. Acad.	*Contra Academicos*
c. Jul.	*Contra Julianum*
c. mend.	*Contra medacium*
conf.	*Confessiones*
civ. Dei.	*De civitate Dei*
dial.	*De dialectica*
disc. Chr.	*De disciplina Christiana*
div. qu.	*De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*
doc. Christ.	*De doctrina Christiana*
en. Ps.	*Enarrationes in Psalmos*
ep.	*Epistula*
f. et op.	*De fide et operibus*
Gn. adv. Man.	*De Genesi adversus Manicheos*
Gn. litt.	*De Genesi ad litteram*
imm. an.	*De immortalitate animae*
lib. arb.	*De libero arbitrio*
mag.	*De magistro*

mend.	*De mendacio*
mor.	*De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum*
mus.	*De musica*
ord.	*De ordine*
quant.	*De quantitate animae*
ret.	*Retractationes*
s. Dom. Mon.	*De sermo Domini in monte*
sol.	*Soliliquia*
util. cred.	*De utilitate credendi*
vera rel.	*De vera religione*

Introduction

AS IN MANY other subjects, St. Augustine did much to lay the foundations for the way the West subsequently thought about education, about the nature of humanity, and about how man can be cultivated so as to achieve his end. Augustine is also the first of the Church's Fathers to analyze systematically the traditional liberal arts curriculum known within the ancient world, which he went on to transform for the purposes of Christian instruction. In 386, having abandoned his teaching career and all hopes of secular advancement, and recovering from a chest illness, he made retreat in the rural villa of his friend Verecundus, twenty-one miles north and east of Milan.[1] As Augustine tried to rethink his past and articulate the reasons for the hope that he as a catechumen had attained, certain features underlying the conditions of man's unhappiness became clear. The goal sought was common; so too were the causes of its frustration. For St. Augustine the philosophical life begins with a quest for happiness (*b. vita,* 10). Augustine observed that no one lacking what he wants can be happy, and even more, that not everyone who has what he wants is happy (*b. vita,* 10–11). Hence the immediate problem of the moral life took on two forms: first, we need to discover *what good* we should want so as to become happy,

1. *c. Acad.* 1.1.4; *conf.* 9.3.5, and see the discussion by Serge Lancel in *Saint Augustine,* trans. Antonia Nevill (London: SCM Press, 2002), 100.

and second, we need to know *how* that good can be obtained in practice. We can be mistaken on either front. What is required, said the young Augustine, is a training in both the knowledge of the proper end and the knowledge of the right method that could bring that end into actuality. What was needed was an outline of Christian education. Though his thought would develop, Augustine remained ever committed to this insight.

As a converted layman, Augustine's first intellectual preoccupation was to realize this task. Beginning but not ending at Cassiciacum Augustine reworked the classical ideal of an ordered series of studies whose proximate origin lay in Varro, and whose original outline goes back possibly to Pythagoras, certainly to Plato and Isocrates.[2] Moving from arithmetic to geometry, astronomy, music, and then dialectic (*Rep.* 521C–531D), Plato had outlined how the student could rise from the contemplation of material form and regularity to an understanding of the elementary principles of causation and cosmic order (528B)—terminating in the experience of the apprehension of the Idea of the Good. Within the Old Academy this schedule knew adaptation by its last head, Philo of Larissa (159/8–84/3 B.C.), and then again by his student Antiochus of Ascalon (ca. 130–69/8 B.C.), the one adding rhetoric, the other, grammar. Among the Hellenistic Jews, Philo of Alexandria (ca. 20 B.C.–50 A.D.) knows a list of five subjects (grammar, music, geometry, rhetoric, and dialectic).[3] In this same period Vitruvius mentions seven subjects of the liberal arts in his *De architectura* which provide the basis for the education of an architect.[4] The theme of

2. Cf. Lambertus Marie de Rijk, "'Egkuklios paedeia': A Study of Its Original Meaning," *Vivarium* 3 (1965): 24–93; Henri-Irénée I. Marrou, *History of Education in Antiquity,* trans. George Lamb (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1956), chapters 6–7; and David Knowles, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought,* 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1988), 54–56.

3. Cf. *De congessu eruditionis gratia* (On the Preliminary Studies), 15–18.

4. *De architectura* 1.1.

intellectual purification through the liberal arts is found in Porphyry. But Augustine quite possibly drew upon Varro's *Disciplinarum Libri* as the immediate authority from which his own scheme gains inspiration.[5] In the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries similar educational programs will be outlined by (the pagan) Martianus Capella in Africa, Cassiodorus in Italy, and Isidore of Seville, in Spain.[6]

At Cassiciacum Augustine set out to produce a course of study whereby the mind of the believer could "advance from corporeal realities to incorporeal" (*retr.* 1.3).[7] By an ordered sequence of contemplation, moving from linguistic to mathematically based studies, the mind could be trained to recognize the elementary principles of theology and so become disposed to receive the content of those sublime mysteries available only through revelation. This, in rough outline, is the theological vision behind Augustine's transformation of the classical curriculum of advanced study, known as the *artes liberales.* Of this ambitious program drafts were made, a few treatises completed, but the project never fully came to fruition. While we do have substantial volumes on grammar, dialectic, and music, it is likely that by 395 Augustine discarded much of his plan for a Christian liberal arts curriculum for what appeared as a decidedly biblical course of study whose structure he outlined in the *De doctrina Christiana.*

In order better to appreciate the value of our subject, and before I explain my reasons for concentrating upon Augustine's earliest educational thought, it will be helpful to anticipate four of the themes

5. See discussion of this in chapter 3.

6. As should be clear from the above, counter to the claims of some contemporary histories of education, there was never a unified "liberal arts curriculum" in the ancient world. What unity it did achieve was due, in part, to Augustine, and more generally to the later tradition of medieval Christian writers. Iohannis Machielsen's collection of Latin patristic texts on the artes liberales up to about the twelfth century illustrates both the diversity and the continuity of the tradition, in CCL, *Clavis Patristica Pseudepigraphorum medii aevi III: A, Artes Liberales* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003).

7. "a quo corporalibus ad incorporalia potest profici" (CCL 57.12).

later developed within *De doctrina Christiana* toward which much of his early work points and which became decisive for the subsequent educational theory and practice of the Christian West.

In the first place, Augustine saw more clearly than anyone before him since Plato the value of investigation into the relationship between *signs* and *things.* Such a discussion has importance for any philosophically minded pagan interested in the justification of knowledge and the way that words communicate about reality. (Augustine's writings were among the favorite books of Wittgenstein and his ideas continue to figure prominently in modern debates about semiotics and epistemology.) For the Christian, however, such an inquiry takes on a determined urgency. Less motivated by the desire to construct an alternative to the surrounding classical literary culture, which was founded upon Homer and Virgil, Augustine set for himself in the *De doctrina Christiana,* as one scholar has put it, the "apostolically sanctioned task of Christian instruction."[8] As Augustine informs us at the beginning of book 1: *Omnis doctrina vel rerum est vel signorum,* "all teaching is of things or of signs" (1.4). The distinction matters partly for the reason that, as we also learn from book 1, some things are to be *enjoyed* while others merely *used.* But we can only know how we should relate to things in the world after we understand what kind of things they are: some things are objects, some are signs, while others are both. And not all things are to be loved in the same way.

Secondly, around the distinction between *usus* and *fruitio* Augustine organized the structure of Christian ethics and a universal method for interpreting the Bible. In the Gospels Jesus had summarized the Jewish Law in the twin commandments of the love of God and neighbor, which contained the "fulfillment and end of the law." In the *De doctrina Christiana* Augustine takes Christ to imply that the work of Christian morality is to learn which are the objects

8. R. P. H. Green, *Augustine: De Doctrina Christiana,* ed. with translation, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), ix–x.

to enjoy (as ends) and which to use (as means). Love requires discrimination. God alone is the one object of the universe that we may properly enjoy: all other loves are instrumental. Augustine's argument is that we rightly love anything only for the sake of the love of God. When we love our neighbor—as ourselves—we do so for the sake of our love of our common Father, present also to the neighbor. Furthermore, because charity is the fulfillment of the law, scriptural exegesis should illumine this master command. Christ's authority guarantees the value of an interpretation which, even though deficient, still exhorts the love of God and neighbor. Every authorial intention within the Bible is subordinate to this master theme.

Important for subsequent generations of readers has also been Augustine's ideas on the relation between faith and reason. In the twelfth-century Renaissance, for instance, Peter Abelard (1079–1142) appeals to Augustine's authority for the prominent use of logic which the reader will find in his own *Introduction to Theology.*[9] One hundred years later, owing mostly to the reintroduction of Aristotle into the West, the thirteenth century took a great interest in the formal description of the discipline of theology. Far from ignoring Augustine in this enterprise, both Aquinas and Henry of Ghent drew upon the *De doctrina Christiana* in their respective formulations of the scientific nature of theology.[10] The two great periods of educational revival since the Middle Ages, instigated by Erasmus

9. *Introductio ad Theologiam,* Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina, ed. Jacques Paul Migne (Paris, 1844–1864), 178.979–1114; cf. Green, *Augustine: De Doctrina Christiana,* introduction and translation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), xxi; James Ramsay McCallum, *Abelard's Christian Theology* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1948); and John Marenbon, *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

10. On this topic, see Joseph Wawrykow's essay "Reflections on the Place of the *De doctrina christiana* in High Scholastic Discussions of Theology," in *Reading and Wisdom: The De doctrina christiana of Augustine in the Middle Ages,* ed. Edward D. English (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 99–125.

in the sixteenth and Newman in the nineteenth century, also drew upon Augustine and his patristic contemporaries.[11]

Fourthly, Augustine's teaching on the relation between reason and revelation is perhaps best captured in his image of the Jews' "Spoiling of the Egyptians" (*doc. Christ.* 2.40.60). This image, earlier used by Origen,[12] communicates the rationale animating Augustine's treatment of the classics in book 2. His evaluations are both practical and theoretical. Concrete advice is offered to the Christian exegete and preacher who would communicate effectively. He must pray, be a good example, and grasp the basics of Ciceronian rhetoric—in that order. In his appropriation of pagan riches Augustine is like an efficient gardener: neither reckless nor sentimental, he prunes what is dead, and cultivates what remains. This disposition is justified by his belief that whatever is of value in the pagan heritage can be grafted onto a nobler vine, and become of use to the Church in her divinely revealed mission.

Discussions concerning liberal education today, of course, often do not take for granted these basic insights of Augustine's most-read educational manual, let alone the history of classical education that preceded it. Since the time of John Dewey, English-speaking educationists have demonstrated a consistent indifference to the history of educational thought. This is largely the result of an unfounded belief

11. Cf. Charles Béné, *Érasme et saint Augustin ou Influence de saint Augustin sur l'humanisme d'Érasme* (Geneva, Switzerland: Librarie Droz, 1969), and James Arthur and Guy Nicholls, *John Henry Newman* (London: Continuum Press, 2007)—and, on the nineteenth-century revival of interest in educational thought in general, see James R. Muir, "Is Our History of Education Mostly Wrong? The Case of Isocrates," *Theory and Research in Education* 3, no. 2 (July 2005): 169–71. For a useful but incomplete survey of the educational influence of St. Augustine, see the final chapter of Gordon Howie, *Educational Theory and Practice in St. Augustine* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), and Ryan Topping, *St. Augustine* (London: Continuum Press, 2010).

12. See *Philocalia* 13.1–2, Origen's letter to his pupil Gregory Thaumaturgus; cf. Mark Julian Edwards's comments in *Origen against Plato* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate Press, 2002), 8.

in social and intellectual "progress." In 1913 Dewey himself believed that he and his contemporaries had "finally reached a point where learning means discovery, not memorizing traditions"[13]—implying that discovery and tradition by necessity conflict. Others have followed this lead. The ignorance of the history of educational thought in general and of the tradition of Christian educational ideas in particular has devolved to such a state that it has now become possible for respected educationists to claim that the history of the philosophy of education itself began with John Dewey![14] Contemporary debates about the nature of liberal education often presume principles irreconcilable to Christianity and the classical tradition of philosophical education that it nurtured. Although vast quantities of scholarship in the humanities continue to be produced, as a civilization we now feel ourselves on the other side of the mountain of Augustine's influence, living as we do, in its shadow.

The following explores the shape of Augustine's early moral

13. Dewey makes wild generalizations about "past philosophies" of education, often without stating who are the "past philosophers" he refers to, or the texts upon which he based his judgments. He simply asserts: "The whole idea and scope of knowledge-getting in education has reflected the absence of such a method, so that learning has meant, on the whole, piling up, worshipping, and holding fast to what is handed down from the past with the title of knowledge. But the actual practice of knowing has finally reached a point where learning means discovery, not memorizing traditions; where knowledge is actively constructed, not passively absorbed; and where men's beliefs must be openly recognized to be experimental in nature, involving hypothesis and testing through being set at work." Cf. "Philosophy of Education" in Paul Monroe, ed., *A Cyclopedia of Education,* 4.697–703 (New York: Macmillan, 1913), 702.

14. James Kaminisky, for example, has claimed that the discipline of educational philosophy began 24 February 1935, with the establishment of the John Dewey Society—a society which later became influential in shaping public educational policy in the United States (179). According to Kaminisky, "educational philosophy" is a designation properly restricted to educational writings that conform to the methods and aims of the social sciences. He concludes, "Educational philosophy—the academic enterprise—was a response to new times, new questions, and new social concerns" (195); cf. "A Pre-History of Educational Philosophy in the United States: 1861–1914," *Harvard Educational Review* 62, no. 2 (1992): 179–98.

theology as seen through the lens of his writings on education in the liberal arts. I argue that Augustine's early outline of liberal education is an aspect of his moral theology, and that it can be best interpreted in this light. From Cassiciacum onward Augustine considered the end of philosophy (or what we might term his "moral theology") to be beatitude, the satisfaction of human aspiration for union with God. Far from being extraneous to his early effort at drawing elements of Ciceronian and Platonic philosophy together with Christianity, Augustine's writings on liberal education reflect his most ambitious sustained attempt at showing how far reason can aid in the divine task of redemption. More specifically, we consider in what ways the study of the arts contributes to this end of moral theology. The ends of liberal education, for Augustine, can be divided according to immediate, proximate, and final purposes. The immediate end of liberal education is the acquisition of moral and intellectual virtue; these are the skills and dispositions that enable a student to think, feel, and act in ways that promote the flourishing of human life. Among these are included the ability to reason from effects to primary cause and the habit of obedience. What I term the proximate end of liberal education, for Augustine, is the formation of a community of pious learners. Attentive to social structures, Augustine's vision for liberal education includes the shaping of a specific educational context that encourages the development of friendships and provides opportunities for shared dialectical enquiry. Together, these immediate and proximate purposes contribute to the final end, happiness. As I point out, exploring how far Augustine thinks the study of the arts can lead the soul along its journey to God will shed light also upon the role of grace in his early soteriology, a subject much debated in Augustinian scholarship.

While keeping the themes of *De doctrina Christiana* in view as the growing light of a widening horizon, I nevertheless wish to focus on Augustine's earliest educational and moral thought, from

Cassiciacum up till (approximately) his ordination in 391 A.D.[15] This restriction is based partly on the subject matter, partly on the moral intent of the study.[16] Most of the significant things Augustine wishes to say about liberal education are said before his ordination. Though a comprehensive description of Augustine's view of liberal education would account for all of his later qualifications and additions, these would have to be understood against the backdrop of his earlier works, and would depend upon the prior historical investigation made here. Furthermore, my goal is not to provide an exhaustive analysis of every part of Augustine's early project, but to focus our attention particularly on the ways that the liberal arts should be understood as extending the purposes and ends of his moral theology.

Modern scholarship on the evolution of ancient *paideia* into Christian education takes its lead from H. I. Marrou's 1948 *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité.*[17] Marrou claimed that antiquity knew

15. Thus, works written between ordination and *De doctina Christiana* are considered only insofar as they help illuminate themes that arise out of his earliest writing. In chapter 5, for instance, I look at texts slightly beyond this period in order to discuss the relationship between *ratio* and *auctoritas* in Augustine.

16. In our time, the idea of a liberal learning is under threat by narrowly scientific accounts of the value of knowledge. My hope is that this study can supply some useful historical background for those wishing to defend a Christian view of liberal education within the contemporary academy. For one type of constructive theological enterprise to which I imagine this historical study can contribute, see Gavin D'Costa's *Theology in the Public Square* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005); for another, see Topping, *St. Augustine* (London: Continuum Press, 2010).

17. Published six times in French it went on to be translated into Italian (1950), English (1956), German (1957), Greek (1961), Spanish (1965), Polish (1969), and Portuguese (1969). In the judgment of Yun Lee Too in his introductory essay to *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), Marrou's work remains "the authoritative history of ancient education" (1). As Hervé Inglebert has recently remarked: "The study of the evolution of ancient culture at the end of the ancient world and its meeting with Christianity is inseparable from the name of Henri-Irénée Marrou" [L'étude de l'évolution de la culture classique à la fin de l'Antiquité et de sa rencontre avec le christianisme est indissociable du nom d'Henri-Irénée Marrou]. Cf. *Interpretatio Christiana: Les mutations des savoirs*

"only one coherent and clearly defined educational system" (p. xiii). In that work he plotted how the principles of Greek education were copied by the Romans, retained through the Byzantine period in the East and, with some modification, preserved within the monastic foundations of the West. Though a number of studies have sought to fill inevitable gaps left by a survey purporting to narrate a "general treatment of the whole subject, integrating all that is really valuable in the new acquisitions into a total synthesis" (p. xi) covering a 1,500-year period, there have been no serious challenges to his main theses.[18]

Except, that is, to Augustine's position within that history. In Marrou's early study of Roman late antiquity, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (1938), the author portrayed Augustine as an ideal representative of the highest intellectual movements of his time and as a key figure in their transmission to the medieval period. The unified curriculum of the liberal arts became after Augustine, albeit with the important addition of the study of the Bible, the educational foundation for "d'une culture chrétienne de type médiéval."[19] After Marrou, the *source* of the educational tradition that Augustine inherited, the *degree* of his adaptation of that tradition, as well as the *extent* of his subsequent influence on its future, have been topics of debate. For our purposes, the reception of Marrou's work may be summarized briefly under these headings.

To begin, a 1984 study by I. Hadot called into question Marrou's account of the sources that Augustine's theologically inspired liber-

(cosmographie, géographie, ethnographie, histoire) dans l'antiquité chrétienne 30–630 après J.-C. (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 2001), 11.

18. What has been offered recently, as in the volume edited by Yun Lee Too, is "a series of independent studies which focus on particular moments in and aspects of education in antiquity" in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity,* 16.

19. Cf. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique,* 4th ed. (Paris: Editions E. de Boccard, 1958), x and 499, and see Mark Vessey's review of Marrou's work in his "Introduction" to AD, 1–12.

al arts curriculum drew upon. Marrou accepted as true Augustine's claim to have received the structure of the curriculum from Varro.[20] Hadot's work argued that, instead of drawing upon an earlier Latin tradition, the sevenfold ordering of the liberal arts was an invention of middle Platonism. As Hadot surmised,[21] Augustine likely drew his ordering of the arts from a (lost) text of Porphyry, not from Varro, an opinion that has not secured scholarly consensus.[22] In regards to Augustine's adaptation of classical sources, M. Vessey, in his introduction to the collection *Augustine and the Disciplines: From Cassiciacum to Confessions* (2005), points out how Hadot's work has rightly drawn attention to the "historical singularity of Augustine's projected 'disciplinarum libri.'"[23] It is now acknowledged that Marrou's history had too hastily led scholars to overlook the originality of the synthesis that Augustine had achieved. No Christian before him had attempted to integrate the classical curricula within the structure of moral theology. For, in outline at least, that is what Augustine attempted to achieve: a synthesis of classical and Christian reflections on the rela-

20. Ilsetraut Hadot, *Arts libéraux et philosophie dans la pensée antique* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1984).

21. Following Hadot, Frederick Van Fletern likewise concludes that Augustine's inspiration for "this program of intellectual purification through the liberal arts is primarily Porphyrian in origin," but offers only more circumstantial evidence to support her original claim; cf. his "Augustine, Neoplatonism, and the Liberal Arts," in *De Doctrina Christiana: A Classic of Western Culture,* ed. Duane W. H. Arnold and Pamela Bright (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 18.

22. The majority of scholars have followed Marrou's view in *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique,* 4th ed., 211ff; on this see Virgilio Pacioni, "Liberal Arts" in AE (summarizing the conclusion of his *L'unità teoretica del De ordine di S. Agostino* [Rome: 1996]), and O'Donnell, who gives a summary of the evidence against Hadot's thesis in *Augustine: Confessions: Introduction, Text and Commentary,* 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 2.269–78. In any event, whether Augustine drew more upon Varro or Porphyry I do not think matters a great deal once you have set for yourself the task of interpreting the texts we have in front of us, and I am happy to follow the prevailing scholarly opinion in the matter.

23. Cf. AD, 8.

tion of learning to happiness. This synthesis is also what Augustine handed on to what would become the medieval educational course in the West in the sequence of the seven liberal arts.

Or did he? The third line of enquiry concerning Augustine's relation to the history of the liberal arts has considered to what extent the medieval tradition developed as a consequence of adopting or positively ignoring aspects of Augustine's educational ideas.[24] The reconsideration of Marrou's original thesis (that Augustine faithfully and forcefully transmitted the substance of the ancient liberal arts to the Latin Middle Ages) began with Marrou's own *retractio* of 1949 which he published in the second edition of *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique.* There he withdrew the claim that *De doctrina Christiana* and other of Augustine's early writings were sufficient to account for the emergence of medieval Christian education. Instead of Augustine passing on a fully integrated Christian curriculum, he now portrayed Augustine at home in the late classical "City of Theopolis"—a man who had more in common with the civilization of Late Antiquity than with the Middle Ages.[25] Marrou suggested that the disruption of the fifth-century invasions had left no one standing capable of taking up the baton of classical learning. What scraps of the tradition of classical education that did find its way into the Middle Ages came, so Marrou argued, from outside the cultural mainstream, in the sequestered milieux of the desert.[26]

24. It occupies, for instance, one of the leading questions addressed in the series of essays collected under the title above, AD.

25. Cf. Marrou's "Retractio" in *Saint Augustin,* 695–99 and Mark Vessey's "The Demise of the Christian Writer in the Remaking of 'Late Antiquity': From Marrou's Saint Augustine (1938) to Peter Brown's Holy Man (1983)," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6, no. 3 (1998): 377–411.

26. On this see Vessey's comments in AD, 4. Among other things, Marrou's "Retractio" was an assault on a positivistic and progressive view of history that was then common in French (as in Anglophone) historiography (cf. *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique,* 685–86). Following Marrou, Inglebert similarly criticizes earlier histories of late antique education on methodological grounds. In Inglebert's view we

Stated baldly, the difficulty with assessing Augustine's influence on medieval education lies in the fact that he seems to have developed not one theory of education, but two. The Augustine of *De ordine* at least *appears* to have adopted in outline the structure and aims of the classical curriculum as much as the Augustine of *De doctrina Christiana appears* to have repudiated them.[27]

Recent work has taken up Marrou's midcentury research on Augustine's place in the history of ancient education.[28] Beyond titles on Augustine's ethics and epistemology, well-focused studies have examined specific disciplines (e.g., music, rhetoric) and individual books (e.g., *De musica* and *De ordine*) relevant to Augustine's theory of the liberal arts.[29] Although specialized work on individual books

do not need to rewrite our histories of antiquity because sources have changed (they have not), but because we can no longer ascribe to the narrative of the West's cultural continuity with the ancient world: "What is more, those works of the late 19th and early 20th century were written in terms of the progress of knowledge, from Antiquity to our own day.... In effect, it supposed there existed a continuity among ancient history or geography and ours, when in reality, the conceptual and social contexts are very different and, in fact, there is no equivalence of concepts" (De plus, ces ouvrages de la fin du XIXe siècle et de la première moitie du XXe siècle étaient le plus souvent rédigés en termes de progrès des connaissances, de l'Antiquité à nos jours.... En effect, elle suppose qu'il existe une continuité entre l'histoire ou la géographie antiques et les nôtres, alors qu'en réalités, les contexts conceptuels et sociaux sont trés différents et qui'il y a en fait équivocité des concepts); *Interpretatio Christiana,* 12–13.

27. This apparent duality in Augustine's thinking is mirrored in the interpretations that readers have drawn from his texts. For example, where Gordon Howie, in his *Educational Theory and Practice in St. Augustine,* gives no indication that Augustine's later thought might be incompatible with his early outline of liberal education, more recent authors, such as Kevin L. Hughes, takes Augustine to have repudiated his earlier course of study by the writing of *De doctrina Christiana;* cf. his "'The Arts Reputed Liberal': Augustine on the Perils of Liberal Education," in *Augustine and Liberal Education,* ed. Kim Paffenroth and Kevin L. Hughes (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate Press, 2000), 95–110.

28. Of which Ilsetraut Hadot's historical work on the origin and transmission of the idea of the liberal arts first published in 1984 and revised as *Arts libéraux et philosophie dans la pensée antique: contribution à l'histoire de l'éducation et la culture dans l'Antiquité,* 2nd ed. (Paris: J. Vrin, 2005), is a fine example.

29. For example: on music, Richard R. La Croix (ed.), *Augustine on Music: An*

and subjects within the liberal curriculum is useful, not all questions can be studied in this way. Indeed, as James O'Donnell has observed, apart from *De vera religione,* everything Augustine wrote between his conversion and his ordination "can be interpreted either as anti-Manichean or pro-*disciplina*."[30] Separating out what belongs within a comprehensive view can tend to obscure the relationship between ideas that originally bore a close proximity in Augustine's own mind. Thus, for instance, we can hardly grasp Augustine's approach to secular learning without also paying attention to his early concept of *auctoritas* and the way that friendship serves to facilitate dialectical enquiry and the mutual exercise of charity.[31] Also, particularly in his Cassiciacum period, if we are to appreciate the complexity of Augustine's views on Christian pedagogy, attention needs to be paid not only to the concepts but also to the action and setting of these early dialogues.[32]

Interdisciplinary Collection of Essays (Queenston, Ontario: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), and Martin Jacobsson's new critical edition *De musica liber VI: A Critical Edition with a Translation and an Introduction,* Studia Latina Stockholmiensia 47 (Stockholm, Sweden: Almquist & Wilksell International, 2002); on rhetoric, Joanne McWilliam, ed., *Augustine from Rhetor to Theologian* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1992); on *De ordine,* see M. P. Steppat, *Die Schola von Cassiciacum: Augustins "De Ordine"* (Bad Honsel: Bock and Herchen, 1980); and see the bibliography at the end of Cornelius Mayer's entry 'Eruditio,' in AugLex.

30. O'Donnell, ed., *Augustine: Confessions,* 2.278.

31. Liz Carmichael provides a survey of Augustine's view of friendship in *Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love* (London: T & T Clark International, 2004), 55–68.

32. The importance of the dialogue form is heightened once we accept the view, which I shall argue for, that the Cassiciacum writings portray Augustine's pedagogical method in living motion. As Michael P. Steppat has written: "The school of Cassiciacum is a communal life of learning " (Die schola von Cassiciacum ist eine Lebensgemeinschaft der Lernenden); see *Die Schola von Cassiciacum: Augustins "De Ordine,"* 82. As such, actions no less than the words represent Augustine's overall educational argument; cf. further, Michael Foley "Cicero, Augustine, and the Philosophical Roots of the Cassiciacum Dialogues," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 45 (1999): 51–77, and my comments in chapter 5.

Rather than focusing on Augustine's sources or on his later influence, at the heart of this study's approach is, then, a desire to make connections between several parts of Augustine's epistemology and his moral theory that generally are considered in isolation. Two errors are to be avoided, it seems: one is to consider it impossible to situate Augustine's theory of the liberal arts within a reasonably consistent theological framework;[33] another is the suggestion that Augustine's reasons for constructing a Christian theory of education can be reduced to self-serving psychological motivations.[34] Our work will be, rather, to show how Augustine's fascinating and ambitious early program for the liberal arts sits well within the structure of his emerging moral theology.

Additionally, in drawing out the connections between Augustine's theory of the liberal arts and his ethics, other features of Augustine's writing on education relate and correlate to wider impulses within his early writings to which Augustine felt it necessary to respond. We can understand Augustine's writing on the liberal arts as responses both to Ciceronian skepticism and Manichean dualism. These two themes, so prominent in his early life and works, find their way into Augustine's writing on education. Briefly, to the first, I try to show how the liberal arts may be understood as an antidote to academic skepticism. To the second, against the Manichean denigration of created natures, the liberal arts are an exercise in the ascent from the created world to the uncreated cause; each of the arts, in

33. Peter Brown, for example, assumes the *De Doctrina Christiana* wholly supplants Augustine's earlier writings on the liberal arts; cf. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography,* 2nd ed. (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), 256–66.

34. While one must be alert to potential developments in his thought and the contexts and motivations for his writings, quite overstated, it seems to me, is Neil McLynn's claim that these early educational texts are "an exhibition," an act of self-definition more important for their effect than their substance, as in "Disciplines of Discipleship in Late Antique Education: Augustine and Gregory Nazianzen" in AD, 25–48.

effect, provides a separate path by which the mind may travel to God by means of creation. Materiality is not to be despised but appreciatively admired as a route of access to God. In short, I intend to show how Augustine's ideas of secular education fit within a comprehensive view of the good life developed in response to the intellectual impulses that he was in dialogue with at the time of his conversion.

Here is the map. Chapter 1 begins with an historical introduction to educational practice and thought prior to Augustine. We shall see that earlier patristic engagements with classical education are marked by a series of additions and subtractions, and that, while many Church Fathers utilized the tools of classical learning, few examined how that integration might be expressed in a systematic way. Chapter 2 then situates Augustine's early moral theology within this broader educational context. This requires both a consideration of Augustine's educational views in the cultural practice of his time, and his response to two influences in particular, Cicero and Mani. Chapter 3 furthers this discussion. Augustine's early vision of the purpose of education is predicated upon the mind's ability to grasp truth: What if this is a fiction? If skepticism should prove true, Augustine's entire project would be undermined. Thus it is fitting that we begin our detailed exploration of Augustine's early texts with his first Christian work and defense of knowledge.

Chapter 4 asks: What does Augustine's treatment of the curriculum tell us about the purpose of liberal education? Every curriculum is shaped by a concept of the value of education. By exploring the structure of Augustine's curriculum, and noting his emphasis on dialectic as the preeminent liberal discipline, here we argue that, in Augustine's view, happiness is the final purpose for education. Having situated Augustine's educational thought within the context of his moral theology, and having demonstrated how the final purpose of liberal education is made manifest in his treatment of the curriculum, chapter 5 explores how other purposes are made manifest

in his account of teaching and learning. Augustine calls authority, for instance, the "medicine of the soul" *(medicina animae; vera rel.* 24.45). Against certain overintellectualist interpretations of Augustine's view of the learning process, I show how the concept of authority shapes his understanding of intellectual and spiritual development. Teaching for Augustine is an act of friendship, motivated by a dual love for God and for the student. While scholars often emphasize how Augustine continued to rely upon Platonic epistemology into the 390s, I show how, even from the beginning of his conversion, Augustine had worked out a distinctive Christian moral theory that requires *auctoritas* to have a central place in the account of the soul's movement from faith to understanding. In this we will see how Augustine conceives other, immediate, and proximate purposes for education, which are logically connected to the achievement of the final end of happiness.

Chapter 6 examines features of Augustine's epistemology and ethics that corroborate the view of the purposes of education argued for. Extending our discussion of authority I argue that Augustine's recognition of Christ as the *disciplina* of God not only suggests how the ideal of independent discovery relates to authority, but goes some distance to justify his confidence in the capacity of the arts to achieve the purposes he hopes they can fulfill. Christ both is the direct cause of the mind's illumination and causes knowledge to arise in the soul *by means of the mediation of authorities.* Finally, by way of summary, chapter 7 analyzes the ends of liberal education in terms of its immediate, proximate, and final purposes.

Augustine's development did not end with ordination. Though I have restricted this study (in the main) to the period before 391, it would be the work of other studies to include Augustine's later thoughts on the relation between education and political justice, and the role of the Holy Spirit in the attainment of *beatitudo* within the context of the sacramental life of the Church. And so,

while I do not offer a complete picture of Augustine's educational thought here, I might suggest the value of *limiting* the question in the ways that I have. First, not every development in an author need be a necessary one. By focusing on Augustine's earliest thought, we avoid the tempting but sometimes unhelpful tendency to read all of what Augustine wrote in the rather focused light of his last word on the subject. It appears that after 391 Augustine was willing to modify his initial outline for a Christian curriculum. His focus shifts from more characteristically philosophical and directly educational concerns to questions of grace and ecclesiology. This turn is usually accounted for as the result of Augustine's intensive study of St. Paul, the Psalms, and the Church's doctrine of original sin. Limiting our treatment to Augustine's early period allows us to evaluate his educational work on its own merits without having to take into account all that Augustine ever wrote. Second, not everything Augustine wrote before ordination will be contradicted. Much of Augustine's later thought on deification and the nature of the Church depends upon, and in some cases, assumes, earlier conclusions arrived at in the context of the Cassiciacum period: the nature and scope of philosophy, the justification of knowledge, the relation between *fides* and *auctoritas,* the distinction between things and signs, each in their own way gets taken up in Augustine's working out of an educational and soteriological vision. By way of a final apology, I might add that allowing Augustine to speak from the point of view of his early years allows us, perhaps with greater facility, to bring Augustine into conversation with alternative political and educational theorists of our own day. Since many no longer share the full range of Augustine's convictions, approaching his educational thought from the point of view of his mature writings can prematurely close off opportunities for fruitful debate.

CHAPTER 1

Liberal Education prior to St. Augustine

ON JUNE 17, 362, the Emperor Julian promulgated an edict that forbade Christian professors to teach classical literature in the schools throughout the empire.[1] If Julian was to succeed in reviving the spirit and the institutions of pagan Greco-Roman civilization through the recovery of the Hellenic ideal of *paideia,* he could not afford to allow Christians to continue to act as the mouthpieces of that tradition.[2] The history of Christian responses to classical culture

1. Cf. Julian, *Ep.* 36, *Cod. Theod.,* 13.3, 5; Michael Bland Simmons, "Julian the Apostate," in Phillip Esler, ed., *The Early Christian World* (London: Routledge, 2000), 1253–55; Carol Harrison, *Christian Truth and Fractured Humanity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 56–57.

2. Julian's writings provide "a well articulated theory of the universality of Roman rule" which found "its metaphysical justification in Neoplatonic terms"; cf. Polymnia Athanassiadi-Fowden, *Julian and Hellenism: An Intellectual Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 169. The legislation was only one of a number of policies intended to discredit and disenfranchise what Julian had come to regard as his primary opponent in the struggle over the future of the empire. This opposition was not merely a political struggle; Julian had a personal acquaintance with Jewish and Christian theology, and his polemical tracts display a sophisticated understanding of the differences between pagan Neoplatonism and the new religion. Hence, in his polemic Julian always refers to Christians as "Galilaeans," and calls Jesus Christ the "Nazarene" or the "novum deum Galilaeum" to make the point that Christianity is a local sect (cf. *ep.* 55 to Photinus). In his *Contra Galilaeos,* for

is complex and varied. The wholesale accommodation of the faith to the surrounding pagan culture, even intellectual culture, was never a practical or theoretical possibility for Christians. Yet, by the time of Julian's edict, theologians had for two centuries been demonstrating how Gentile texts complemented Jewish prophecies about the Messiah: since Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria, apologists had been presenting their religion as the true Hellenism, the divinely revealed answer to the ancient philosopher's quest.[3] And by the fourth century that interpretation had become difficult to resist. In the field of rhetoric, Christians were equal to or had surpassed their pagan rivals; in the schools of philosophy, believers occupied the highest chairs; and more generally, Christians taught at every level of society.[4] Material and social hardships caused by the restriction would have been immense. But, beyond these, what did Christians

instance, he contrasts the universalism of Hellenic monotheism with the parochial god of the Jews (148B). Further, he derides Christians for inventing doctrines inconsistent with the Old Testament (e.g., the doctrine of Christ's divinity) (276E) and customs not found in the New Testament (e.g., honoring the tombs of martyrs) (335C).

3. Cf. Frances Young's "Greek Apologists of the Second Century," in Mark Edwards, Martin Goodman, Simon Price, and Christopher Rowlands, eds., *Apologetics in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 81–104, and Richard J. Norris's "The Apologists," in CHCL.

4. In Jaeger's words, "by the end of the fourth century A.D. Christian rhetoric and philosophy dominated the scene." Cf. *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962), 78. To substantiate this, one can point to several prominent public Christian intellectuals. For example, Anatolius (future bishop of Laodicea) was elected to teach Aristotelian philosophy at Alexandria in 264 (Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* 7.32.6). Although Anatolius's prodigious learning is well attested to—as a natural philosopher he is remembered for working out a nineteen-year cycle for the dating of Easter (Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 7.32.14–20)—we note that Jerome makes no comment on Anatolius's activity as a teacher (Jer. *De vir. ill.* 78). Other examples we may point to in the third and early fourth centuries include Lactantius (ca. 250–ca. 325), appointed to teach Latin rhetoric in Nicomedia (then seat of the Emperor Diocletian) (Jer. *De vir. ill.* 80), and Origen, who took up teaching grammar in 202–203 A.D. (Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 6.2.15).

fear to lose by Julian's edict? What about the classics did Julian hope to guard and devout professors desire their students to uncover? In order to establish something of the historical and intellectual context of Augustine's early writings on education, and to make possible comparisons and contrasts with earlier Christian writers where these are helpful to understanding Augustine, this chapter traces the principal ways that earlier Christians took up and discarded elements of the classical tradition of education.

No uniform methodological principle describes the complex appropriation of classical culture that occurred between the second and fourth centuries. There was neither all-out antagonism nor woolly assimilation. Modern scholars have sometimes too easily adopted the view that the fourth century was characterized by a total and fully conscious battle between paganism and Christianity, a view which, evidently, derives from the reconstruction presented by historians of the fifth century.[5] In asking what Christians feared to lose by this legislation, then, we need to attend both to the additions and to the subtractions Christians made to ancient *paideia*. We need to be responsive, in other words, both to what Christians said about the liberal arts (and rhetoric and philosophy generally) and how far Christians utilized the fruits of ancient education without explicitly drawing attention to this fact. To this end, with reference to both the Greek and the Latin Fathers, I look at the educational debts that early Christians owed to pagan education; after that, I describe their subtractions; the final section assesses the distinctive contribution of St. Basil's *Ad Adulescentes* as the only systematic Christian critique before St. Augustine's on the value of the pagan liberal arts tradition. By the fourth century Christians had learned to adopt the resources of classical education for the purposes of apologetics and for the articulation of their own

5. As Peter Brown points out in his *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 126–46, especially at 128.

developing doctrine; yet few Church Fathers took the next step to integrate these resources into a broader conception of the aims of (moral) theology.

But all of this subtraction and addition presupposed an existing classical tradition. Augustine along with the early Christian writers that I refer to in this chapter could take for granted the organization of various schools and the habits of teaching common in the ancient world. Some description would be useful.[6] As a means of filling in that background, and before turning to a selection of Christian models of education prior to Augustine, I consider briefly the institutional settings of late antique education, and particularly the differences between schools of rhetoric and philosophy.[7]

Institutional Settings and the Practices of Late Antique Education

Not only St. Augustine,[8] but modern historians also distinguish between three levels of education in the ancient world: instruction given by the *ludi magister, grammaticus,* and *rhetor.*[9] Though this

6. Among the many detailed treatments of educational practices in the ancient world one may see, for instance, Marrou, *History of Education in Antiquity;* Stanley Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977); two works by Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), and *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007); and Konrad Vössing, *Schule und Bildung im Nordafrika der Römischen Kaiserzeit* (Brussels: Latomus, 1997).

7. In addition to complementing our sketch of earlier Christian accounts, the ensuing discussion of models of ancient education will allow us to draw a number of comparisons between traditional models and Augustine's, which I shall do in a limited way in chapter 2.

8. As Augustine records in his own educational narrative within the *Confessions,* books 1.9.15–2.10.18 concern elementary and grammatical education, book 3 turns to rhetoric.

9. This is the basic division followed, for instance, by Marrou in his founda-

division requires certain qualifications, as would reflect differences of time and place within the Roman Empire,[10] for our purposes this customary division will serve as a useful template.

We can move through the first stage rather quickly. Both during the Republic and the late Empire the upper class expected their sons to learn letters. For someone from a family with even modest means, this much was taken for granted. In his early education, for example, Augustine relates how he learned to read, to write, to count (*legere, scribere, numerare*).[11] As one scholar puts it: "Within the elites of the established Graeco-Roman world a degree of written culture was a social necessity, and an illiterate male would have been regarded as bizarre."[12] Such children were either taught by tutors or sent to school; customarily they would begin basic instruction by seven years of age.[13] Nor was it uncommon for girls of this class and slaves also to learn to read and write. There were practical reasons for this: women would be responsible for managing households, and slaves were necessary for the administration of estates. Such school accommodation that did exist appears to have been makeshift. Teachers would give instruction out of their own home,

tional study *A History of Education in Antiquity,* and by Stanley Bonner in *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny*; as Vössing points out in *Schule und Bildung im Nordafrika der Römischen Kaiserzeit,* at *Conf.* 1.13.20 and 3.3.6 Augustine speaks of *primi magistri, grammatici,* and then *rhetores* (at the *schola rhetoris*), 567.

10. Quintilian, for instance, observes that the line separating grammatical from rhetorical education has not always been observed (Quint. *Instit.* 2.1.1–6); further complicating the matter, he also suggests there could be a period of transition between grammar and rhetoric where a student would have two instructors at once (2.1.13). Differences in teaching practice within the empire are discussed by William V. Harris in *Ancient Literacy* (London: Harvard University Press, 1989), 233–53.

11. *conf.* 1.13.20; as pointed out by Vössing, in *Schule und Bildung im Nordafrika der Römischen Kaiserzeit,* 568.

12. Harris, *Ancient Literacy,* 248.

13. Quint. *Inst.* 1.1.15–24.

rent a shop space, or simply run their classes outside, as for instance in an arcade at the edge of the Forum.[14] Elementary tutors were underpaid. Diocletian's Price Edict (A.D. 301) legislated that elementary teachers were to receive fifty denarii a month for each pupil —one quarter the rate paid to *grammatici.* (*Rhetores* fared better at 250 per month; in 376 Gratian gave *rhetores* an even higher wage.[15]) While Christians obviously put a great emphasis upon reading the written word, a habit they carried over from Jewish communities,[16] there is little evidence to suggest that they attempted to increase literacy among the lower classes in general.[17] The claim to illiteracy could even be exploited as a mark of wisdom. Christian ambivalence toward classical literary culture was one factor that made it possible to conceive of a holy man who had attained sanctity without recourse to books. Finally, when Roman emperors took an interest in education, and this only after Vespasian (A.D. 69–79), it was almost always in higher education.[18]

Grammatical and rhetorical education, by contrast, was prestigious, and is discussed at length in literary sources. At this second-

14. See Stanley Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome,* 115–25; but he cautions that evidence for the precise settings of instruction at all levels is sparse: "There is scarcely any part of the study of Roman education in which precise information is so difficult to obtain as that which concerns the localities and premises in which teaching took place" (115).

15. On this topic, see further Harris, *Ancient Literacy,* 308, and Cribiore, *Gymnastics for the Mind,* 46–64.

16. On this issue, see further Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), 17–19.

17. In the fourth century oral culture remains strong even while educated Christians are highly literate; on this topic, see Harris, *Ancient Literacy,* 311; alternatively, William Hugh Clifford Frend gives a more positive assessment of early Christian work to educate the poor in *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 212.

18. On the above paragraph I have benefited particularly from the discussions in Harris, *Ancient Literacy,* 235–306, and Stanley Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome,* 115–25.

ary level the educator initiated the student into a literary culture that included both the interpretation of classic texts and the training in proper speech. Above all, grammatical education provided a foundation for the mastery of words. Looking back, Augustine relates that from these years he learned to be able "to read whatever I find written, and myself to write whatever I wish."[19] Drawing upon earlier definitions, Sextus Empiricus, for example, relates that the primary task of the grammarian is to interpret poets such as Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Euripides, and Menander, and also "what is in the writers, such as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Plato."[20] Quintilian speaks likewise. Near the beginning of his *Institutio Oratoris* he makes it clear that grammatical education includes the interpretation of poets and prose writers—in addition to training in correct diction and pleasing style.[21] Practically speaking, such training included a variety of components. Plutarch relates how grammatical education begins with the moral lesson: poetry incompatible with philosophy is useless (Plut. *De poetis* 16A). From Plutarch (and from a text formerly attributed to him, *De Homero*) we find that the grammarian would elucidate unfamiliar vocabulary; he would construct elaborate etymologies; and more generally, he was responsible for historical notes and explanations of persons, places, and events referred to in the text under scrutiny.[22] To this list of responsibilities Quintilian adds that scientific as well as philosophical explanations are very often needed since literary works deal with these themes too (Quint. *Instit.* 1.4.4–5).

This broad learning focused nevertheless upon a relatively small body of texts. Better to know a few books well than many poorly,

19. *conf.* 1.23.20; CCL 29.11.

20. *Math.* 1.58; trans. D. L. Blank.

21. Quint. *Instit.* 1.4.7; 1.5.1; for a comparison of ancient definitions of grammar, see David L. Blank's commentary in *Sextus Empiricus: Against the Grammarians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 126–28.

22. As discussed by Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind,* 204–10.

was the sentiment. The concentration of literate education upon a selective body of works goes back to the Greeks. Here, Homer was the undisputed master. To appreciate how widely his poetry was studied (and at that the *Iliad* more than the *Odyssey*) papyrological evidence is useful. About one thousand Homeric papyri have been discovered to date. The significance of this figure becomes clear when one considers how that is approximately ten times the number of papyri discovered by the next most attested to author, Euripides.[23] Among Latin speakers likewise there was a stock list of works that were laboriously studied. Some of the early Latin writers, like Livius Andronicus (who translated the *Odyssey*), likely used their own works as the basis of literary education. By the fourth century Ausonius (A.D. 310–395) mentions Virgil, Horace, and Terence as the three Latin poets whom his grandson will read at school.[24] Furthermore, allusion and quotation of classical authors fill the pages of the Latin fathers, Augustine particularly.[25] Grammatical education would typically begin in the student's tenth or twelfth year and end in their fifteenth; after that, should the student continue, he would travel to a school of rhetoric or perhaps to a school of medicine or philosophy.

Completion of studies under a grammarian marks the point when a young person leaves behind what, at least to some, marks the boundary of liberal education. Linguistically, *artes liberales* is the nearest Latin equivalent to "ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία" and rightly signals a conceptual continuity between Greek and Roman notions

23. Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind,* 194.

24. For discussions of Latin authors read, see Martin Lowther Clarke, *Higher Education in the Ancient World* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), 19–21, Brown, *Augustine of Hippo,* 23–25, and more generally, Cribiore, *The School of Libanius,* 194.

25. Well documented by Harold Hagendahl in *Latin Fathers and the Classics: A Study on the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers* (Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1958).

of preparatory study. Quintilian sketches the early education of his ideal orator and takes the Greek model as his pattern:

> I shall now cursorily consider the other arts, which I believe boys ought to be instructed in before they are handed over to the teacher of rhetoric, so that the circle of education [*orbis doctrinae*], which the Greeks call ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία, would be complete.[26]

According to Quintilian, the Greek *egkyklios paideia* signifies a "circle" of preparatory studies.[27] These are equivalent to the circle of preliminary arts that he himself recommends for the development of future orators. There is an imprecision in the application of terminology among ancient sources on this matter. Rhetoric is sometimes included among the *artes liberales* (as, e.g., in the list of Vitruvius; *De arch.* 1.1), while other times it is treated as a distinct subject in its own right (as above in Quintilian). We have already noted that rhetoric might be pursued along with the other encyclical studies. More typically, and this from the time of Isocrates, if the student should go further, rhetorical education would continue in a more intensive way once grammatical education was completed.[28]

26. "Nunc de ceteris artibus, quibus instituendos, priusquam rhetori tradantur, pueros existimo, strictim subiungam, ut efficiatur orbis ille doctrinae, quem Graeci ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία vocant"; *Institutionis oratoris* (1.10.1; LCL 124.158–60).

27. Though Quintilian drew an easy equivalence between his and the Greek ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία, the Roman system that Quintilian recommends matches, in fact, only the latest form of the "circle of studies" developed by the Greeks. In retracing the precise meaning of the term "ἐγκύκλιος" de Rijk identified three phases in the development of Greek education into the Hellenistic period: from the middle of the fifth century B.C. the term denotes the activities of choric education (and hence a combination of music and gymnastic education); in its second manifestation it comes to focus almost exclusively on literary studies; and then after Plato, "ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία" includes both literary and mathematical disciplines; cf.

"'Egkuklios paedeia': A Study of Its Original Meaning," *Vivarium* 3 (1965): 24–93, especially at 85–92.

28. On this issue, see Clarke, *Higher Education in the Ancient World,* 2–6.

Schools of Rhetoric and Philosophy

Schools of rhetoric and philosophy differed in the first instance as to the purposes which liberal (preparatory) education should serve.[29] The two foundational Greek models developed in response to the early Sophists.[30] Dissatisfaction with what was perceived as the Sophists' ethical pragmatism prompted both Plato and Isocrates to seek alternative accounts of the substance and value of liberal education.[31] In Plato's view, the best education promotes the philosophical search for and discovery of knowledge, and is an activity independent of politics. By contrast, Isocrates promotes the production of useful knowledge; education serves the aims of politics directly.[32] In Augustine's day, the goal of rhetorical education remained the same. These schools aimed to teach students the art of words, "to acquire the eloquence wholly necessary for persuading."[33] The first education makes independent rational enquiry into

29. For standard accounts of the difference between Platonic and Isocratic views of the value of education, see, for instance, chapters 6 and 7 of *History of Education in Antiquity,* David Knowles's *Evolution of Medieval Thought,* 54–56, and Janet M. Atwill's *Rhetoric Reclaimed: Aristotle and the Liberal Arts Tradition* (London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 19–21.

30. The Sophists were itinerant teachers who promised to instruct young men how to be successful in public life. Protagoras (b. ca. 485 B.C.), for instance, declared his aim was to teach "the art of politics" (Pl. *Prot.* 319A). And for ten thousand drachmas (a skilled laborer earned one per day) a father could send his son to him on a three- or four-year innovative course that aimed to cultivate success.

31. Protagoras is said to have been the first to teach that it is possible to argue for any position. His younger contemporary Gorgias of Leontini seems to have been a nihilist: both were masters of persuasive speech, and highly popular. According to Andrew Ford, since Heinrich Gomperz's *Sophistik und Rhetorik* (Stuttgart, 1912), and in agreement with Plato's overall judgment, "a basically stable idea of what sophists were and did has prevailed among scholars" identifying the core of their interests with rhetoric and relativism (86), "Sophists without Rhetoric" in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity,* 85–109.

32. Cf. *Rep.* 536–41; Isoc. *Antidosis* 266, 355, *Panathenaicus* 30–32, *Contra Sophisticos* 21–22.

33. *conf.* 1.16.26; CCL 27.14.

the nature of the good the primary object of study; the second assumes a conception of the good as offered by the *politeia*. Between these traditions Quintilian, like Aristotle,[34] suggested something of a *tertium quid*. Though Quintilian adopts rhetoric as the highest form of study—thereby placing himself within the Isocratic tradition—he does so while insisting that the true rhetorician will also acquire wisdom through philosophical method. If this is what the two traditions sought, what were their methods?

Evidence for the day-to-day working of the rhetorical and philosophical schools is not copious, yet individual details that are known have allowed scholars to provide sketches for each.[35] We begin with rhetorical schools, and with the East. In Roman Egypt grammarians were found only in the cities (e.g., Alexandria and Hermopolis) or large villages. Professional teachers of rhetoric must have been even less common. The rhetorician Libanius (A.D. ca. 314–393), a contemporary with Augustine, offers a rare glimpse into the practical working of such schools through his letters; though best known for his school in Antioch, his testimony is helpful for reconstructing the conditions of rhetorical education at the time of Augustine more generally.[36] In terms of students, rhe-

34. As Atwell relates, Aristotle attempted to preserve what was of value in the sophistic tradition by relegating it to an art, safeguarding the tradition by sharply distinguishing rhetoric from philosophy: "The critical value of Aristotle's taxonomy is that it did leave room for art; to a large extent it preserved the sophistic tradition by placing rhetoric in the domain of technē rather than in that of philosophy"; see in *Rhetoric Reclaimed: Aristotle and the Liberal Arts Tradition,* 188–89.

35. In this paragraph I draw particularly upon Cribiore's discussion in *Gymnastics of the Mind,* 40–62.

36. I will discuss North African rhetorical education below. While we should expect some differences between rhetorical schools across the empire, Cribiore nevertheless notes the remarkable uniformity in education at this level: "The school served youths from all provinces of the Roman East. Its curriculum and teaching methods were common to other schools of the Roman Empire, so that the works of Libanius also provide a clear, welcome window on higher education in other times and places." See *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch,* 1.

torical schools were intimate when compared to modern or even medieval universities: Libanius tells us that at Constantinople he had up to eighty students; at Antioch he began with only seventeen students, though this later increased to fifty. (We know of another second-century teacher, Philostratus, who boasted of one hundred paying students.) Assistants would help share the teaching load, hearing students' practice exercises and offering correction. In order to pass through his curriculum Libanius's pupils would begin at fourteen or fifteen and could stay up to five years, or more, depending on their talent, inclination, and ability to pay. Ideally in the first year students would learn the principles of oratory; the second year would be devoted to prose works. These models would then serve as the basis for speaking exercises, which would in turn occupy their third, fourth, and fifth years. That was the ideal. In practice few stayed so long. The average attendance of students concerning whom we have record is not longer than two years.[37] Higher education in the ancient world ended early. By way of contrast with contemporary European and American systems, we might consider how the younger Pliny, Origen, and St. Augustine all ended their formal education before nineteen.[38]

Before looking at the purpose and methods of teaching at rhetorical schools, at this juncture it is useful to emphasize the common culture that united men of letters in the empire, East and West. When we compare Augustine's program with previous models that he could have been aware of, we should not allow regional differences to distract us from the more important similarities that brought all men of the upper class together: Augustine was not excluded from Roman culture because he was from North Africa.[39]

37. Based on the evidence presented in Cribiore's appendix two, "Length of Students' Attendance," in *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch.*

38. I owe this observation to Clarke, *Higher Education in the Ancient World,* 6.

39. On this see Brown, *Augustine of Hippo,* 35–39; on another African two

Augustine read what others read, in Latin at least.[40] To illustrate this we need only to call to mind other Africans and provincial writers of the period. Among Christians, we will say more below about Tertulian and Lactantius. First among the African pagans, at least from the point of view of his influence upon Augustine, is Apuleius.[41] Born in the 120s in Madauros (where Augustine studied rhetoric, *conf.* 2.3.5), Apuleius is the author of an impressive variety of works, rhetorical, philosophical, and fanciful.[42] Apuleius tells us that his own liberal education began in Carthage, but that he traveled to Athens where he advanced in poetry, geometry, music, dialectic, and, of course, philosophy.[43] Unlike Augustine, he was fluent in Greek. Moving forward in time, the other African famous for his interest in the liberal arts and contemporary with Augustine is Martianus Capella. Other than that he was from Carthage, little is known of his life. His most important work, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* (written somewhere between A.D. 410 and 439) is an elaborate allegory of the liberal arts and was a major source of the disciplines during the Middle Ages.[44] Compared to Apuleius and Augustine, however, Capella had little interest in philosophers.

centuries earlier, Simon Harrison stresses the same: "It is crucially important for a true appreciation of Apuleius to realize that he belongs not to an African subculture but to the mainstream of Latin culture and literature, with his much-vaunted fluency in Greek acquired as it would be by a well-educated Roman"; see his "General Introduction" to *Apuleius: Rhetorical Works,* trans. Simon Harrison, John Hilton, and Vincent Hunink, ed. Simon Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1.

40. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics,* 2.690–92.

41. On Augustine's knowledge of Apuleius, see Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics,* 1.17–28, 2.680–89.

42. For an introduction to his texts, see Stephan J. Harrison, *Apuleius: A Latin Sophist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

43. Apul. *Flor*. 18.15, 20.3, 20.4.

44. As William Harris Stahl discusses in his introduction to *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 1.21–27.

He retained only enough of the old education to recognize that he needed them to make appearances in his work, introducing the disciplines, if his book was to be taken seriously.[45] Finally, we mention Macrobius and his *Saturnalia.* Again not a native of Italy, Macrobius was likely proconsul of Africa in A.D. 410. The purpose of his book, as Macrobius tells us, is to provide his son with a store of useful information.[46] The imaginary dialogue begins on the eve of and continues during the festival of the Saturnalia. It records the conversation of twelve main characters, whose chief topic is the learning of Virgil, through whom every branch of learning was gathered.[47] Like Capella's allegory and Augustine's early works on the liberal arts, Macrobius's text is one more example illustrating how far the garb of Latin learning had been flung across the empire, and how many at the end of the age felt the need to preserve and defend it.[48]

Returning to the main thread of our discussion, within the rhetorical schools imitation of literary sources provided the core of higher education. Rhetorical education was divided between two primary activities: preparatory exercises and declamations. Among the preparatory exercises—listed in a work by Ailios Theon (first or second century A.D.), for instance—include the reading and recitation by memory of set texts, the retelling of fables, the com-

45. For example, Aristotle discusses dialectic, Pythagoras arithmetic, Plato astronomy; see Stahl, *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts,* 9–10.

46. Macrob. *Sat.* pref. 1–3.

47. For a purview of the characters, setting, and themes of the *Saturnalia,* see Percival Vaughan Davies's introduction to *Macrobius: The Saturnalia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 1–23.

48. The need to preserve the classical tradition was felt by both pagans and Christians at the end of the empire. As Percival Vaughan Davies writes in his introduction to Macrobius's *Saturnalia*: "In the fourth century the hostility of a Christian 'Establishment' at first provoked in the pagan opposition a revival of interest in the classical writers of Rome. Then the growing pressure of the barbarian invasions brought home to Christian and pagan alike the need to safeguard a common cultural inheritance in the face of a common enemy" (23).

position of narratives, and comment upon anecdotes. From these students would graduate to declamations, the composition of fictitious speeches.[49] Primarily as training for the courtroom, public performances of declamations were extremely popular also as a social pastime; when delivered by a famous orator such events could attract huge crowds. In terms of the purpose of rhetorical education, imitation and the training of the mind aimed to prepare the student to speak with ease and convincingly on a wide variety of topics. These skills were highly useful. There were no guarantees; but after training at a school like Libanius's students could hope for a bright future. In his *Oration* 55, for example, Libanius boasts that his graduating students can anticipate deference from the outside world, as he says of himself: "Teachers of rhetoric are respected by all governors, small and great, and even by emperors."[50] A career in law, for instance, was a typical next stop. Augustine's own rhetorical studies, which as a young man he too understood were highly respectable *(quae honesta uocabantur)*, aimed to bring him distinction as an advocate in the courts.[51] As in the rhetorical schools, teachers of philosophy also aimed to train the mind; but the end that philosophers had in view, and the skills that they tried to cultivate, called for a different type of community.

For one thing, philosophical schools were far less common. To be sure, their effects were (unevenly) felt over all aspects of culture

49. On the structure of rhetorical education, see Laurent Pernot, *Rhetoric in Antiquity,* trans. William Edwards Higgins (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 148–55.

50. From *Oration 55*: "How great it is to rule over wellborn young men and see them improve in rhetoric and proceed to the various paths of life! And what about the honors one receives from them and their fathers, from citizens and foreigners? Teachers of rhetoric are respected by all governors, small and great, and even by emperors" (quoted in Cribiore, *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch,* 1). On some of the difficulties involved in measuring the precise relationship between education and worldly success, see, however, her comments at 197–228.

51. *conf.* 3.3.6; CCL 27.29.

and many people would have had some taste of philosophical works. After all, it was while studying rhetorical textbooks *(libros eloquentiae)*—as he notes, *in the usual order (usitato . . . discendi ordine)*—that Augustine stumbled across his first book of philosophy, Cicero's *Hortensius*.[52] And its presence in a standard curriculum of rhetoric demonstrates just how difficult it is to mark any impenetrable barrier standing between the two cultures in antiquity. But one has constantly to keep in mind that philosophers were few. Unlike joining a school of rhetoric, to enter a philosophical community was to participate in a minority culture often recognized as the ideal but seldom experienced. The practical consequences of joining such a community were dramatic, as one scholar has described it:

> It meant breaking with the usual culture, whose general tone . . . was literary, rhetorical and aesthetic. It meant even more, for Hellenistic philosophy was not only a special kind of intellectual training, it was also an ideal of life that claimed the whole man. To become a philosopher meant adopting a new way of life—one that was more exacting morally and demanded a certain amount of ascetic effort.[53]

Philosophical schools throughout antiquity proposed and offered an alternative way of life to that which could be found within the dominant cultures of the ancient world.

The earliest such philosophical school seems to have been the Pythagorean, which began in the sixth century B.C. With evening examination of conscience and daily spiritual exercises, the Pythagoreans have rightly been characterized as a quasi-religious community.[54] (Closer to Augustine's time, Iamblichus would embody and encourage the Pythagorean blend of enquiry with cult, a style of philosophy that he revitalized.)[55] The four principal classical schools that

52. *conf.* 3.6.7; CCL 27.29.

53. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity,* 282.

54. And is described by Clarke in *Higher Education in the Ancient World,* 55–59.

55. Iamblichus embodies the blend of cult and enquiry through his own deeds in Eunapius's account of the philosopher, in his *Lives of the Philosophers and Soph-*

continued in some form to Augustine's time were founded in quick succession at Athens after Socrates' death: Plato's Academy 387 B.C., Aristotle's Lyceum 335 B.C., Epicurus's Garden 306 B.C., and in 301 B.C. Zeno gathered disciples. Diogenes Laertius relates how Plato began to live at the Academy after returning from a tour of Italy.[56] It appears to have been located about three-quarters of a mile outside of one of Athens' city gates, on a property close to a gymnasium. The garden apparently had a small shrine to the Muses and a house where Plato lived.[57] Students would perhaps stay for two years, or longer, as did Aristotle. We know of only one public lecture that Plato gave, on the good. Most of the teaching appears to have occurred over small group discussion or private seminars. Drinking parties or *symposia* were important occasions. For instance, during Xenocrates' leadership of the Academy (B.C. 339–314) every ten days a different member of the community held the position of *archon*. The *archon* was a social convener. In addition to certain minimal religious responsibilities, he coordinated regular evening gatherings where conversation could mix freely with food and drink.[58] Fifty years after the Academy Aristotle founded the Lyceum. As we learn from Aris-

ists, 457–61. On Iamblichus's life in the context of Emperor Julian's revival of Hellenism, see Gregory Shaw, *Theurgy and the Soul: The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 1–17.

56. *Diog. Laert.* 3.5–7.

57. Bear in mind that there is little evidence to go on as regards the precise size of the main building of the Academy. After a review of the evidence John Dillon offers this description: "The property is described in various ancient sources, with a diminutive, as a 'little garden', but this description must be seen, I think, as reflecting the more spacious perspective of the Roman imperial period. The evidence suggests that it must have comprised a couple of acres at least . . . the students of the Academy were able to live in huts or cabins (*kalybia*) of their own construction 'near the shrine of the Muses and the lecture-hall [*exedra*]' . . . we must assume, not only room for a group of simple cabins as well as the main building, but space for a *mouseion* and *exedra* as well"; see *The Heirs of Plato: A Study of the Old Academy, 347–274 B.C.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 9–10.

58. On this issue, see further Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity,* 282–95, and Clarke, *Higher Education in the Ancient World,* 59–67.

totle's will, Plato's best student was wealthy. But as a foreigner he could own no property in Athens, so he may have taught in a rented house. The Lyceum as a propertied institution, however, dates not from Aristotle's time but from that of its second head Theophrastus (B.C. 321–287). It was Theophrastus who bought a garden in Athens and modeled the school more closely on the example of Plato's. Epicurus also bought property. Membership appears to have been open to people of any background, including slaves; from Epicurus's letters we find that rich members had to pay an annual fee and that they were obliged to help if other members of the philosophical community were in need. Finally, unlike the other three classical schools, Zeno and his immediate successors had no land. Instead, Zeno lectured in the most public of place in Athens, the Stoa on the Agora, and it was from there that he attracted and instructed his followers.[59] There would be later foundations in Alexandria and philosophical communities present elsewhere, such as in Rome, but until the closure of the Academy by Julian in A.D. 529 Athens remained in a very concrete way the spiritual center of philosophy in the ancient world.[60]

Closer to Augustine's own time the most important philosopher was Plotinus. His school, and the influence of Plotinus's students, decisively shaped the nature of philosophical education for the century before and after Augustine, so it is useful to pause here before drawing more general conclusions about the purpose of

59. On the structure and practice of these last three schools, see Carl Natali's essay "Schools and Sites of Learning," trans. Catherine Porter and Jeannine Pucci, in *Greek Thought: A Guide to Classical Knowledge,* ed. Jacques Brunschwig and Geoffrey E. R. Lloyd (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), 191–215, especially 200–210.

60. The physical school that Plato founded in Athens, however, likely did not survive past the first century B.C. On efforts to revive the presence of philosophical schools in Athens throughout the ancient world, see Natli, "Schools and Sites of Learning," 210–15.

philosophical education in the ancient world.[61] Our best evidence for Plotinus's school comes from his pupil Porphyry. Born in Tyre, after having spent time in Athens with the Platonist philosopher Longinus, in 263, at thirty years of age, Porphyry set out for Rome. The ancient biographer Eunapius suggests that Porphyry may have come to Rome as an independent philosopher, and only later become a disciple of Plotinus.[62] At any rate, Porphyry tells us that when he did arrive there was not much to see. Plotinus was still on holiday.[63] Apparently the long vacation extended, as it continues in some places today, from late July to mid-October.[64]

Philosophical schools in late antiquity were constituted by three types of people: casual associates, devoted disciples, and patrons. It was not uncommon for a young man finishing his course of rhetoric to drop in for a time on a philosophical school (Apuleius is an example of this); Porphyry, on the other hand, had come to stay. Devotees remained a seemingly indeterminate amount of time: Amelius would study with Plotinus for ten years, the same duration that Plotinus had stayed with his teacher Ammonius.[65] Apprenticeship was the model of learning, and at least for some, life in the school could become an end in itself. Exceptional students might take on duties. Plotinus entrusted both Porphyry and Amelius, for example, with the task of refuting heretics.[66] Small group discussion was important; so was the lecture. Porphyry re-

61. In this and the next two paragraphs I have benefited particularly from an article by John Dillon, "Philosophy as a Profession in Late Antiquity," in *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire,* ed. Simon Swain and Mark Edwards (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 401–18.

62. Eunap. *VS* 456; John Hugo Wolfgang Gideon Liebeschuetz dates Eunapius's work ca. A.D. 400 in *Decline and Change in Late Antiquity: Religion, Barbarians, and Their Historiography* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate Press, 2006), 179–80.

63. Porph. *Plot.* 5.

64. So Marrou in *A History of Education in Antiquity,* 362.

65. Dillon, "Philosophy as a Profession in Late Antiquity," 403.

66. Porph. *Plot.* 16.

lates that Plotinus was a charming speaker (though occasionally given to slips in diction). He seems to have developed a teaching style that combined lecture with the tutorial model, but he did not please everyone. Porphyry records how one student, Thaumasius, wanted Plotinus to talk without taking questions. Unfortunately, that is what Plotinus liked most to do: speak and take questions. And it took the prodding of Porphyry before Plotinus would finally write something down.[67] Compared to this rather ad hoc method of presentation and discussion, a few years later Iamblichus would establish a much more systematic curriculum, where students read a set cycle of Platonic dialogues and texts in Aristotelian logic.[68] The third group attached to these schools in late antiquity were the rich. Just because ancient sources speak little of finances does not mean patronage was unimportant. Among the philosophical schools in this period only the Academy is known to have obtained a self-supporting endowment.[69] Plotinus, like Iamblichus, relied directly upon friends. Plotinus's school operated out of a spacious house donated by a certain Gemina,[70] and had no designated successor. Lacking a permanent foundation, when Plotinus was too ill to teach, the fellowship disbanded. Porphyry returned to Rome in 305 and thirty-five years after Plotinus's death, reestablished a philosophical community in the great capitol.

In sum: looking back on the institutional settings of philosophy in the ancient world, schools gathered around a famous teacher; were comprised of students, friends, and patrons; and typically drew their curriculum from some combination of classic Greek texts and the master's own work. Philosophy was a stable institution in the ancient world, though individual communities were less

67. Porph. *Plot.* 16; 13; 5.
68. Dillon, "Philosophy as a Profession in Late Antiquity," 408.
69. Dillon, "Philosophy as a Profession in Late Antiquity," 418.
70. Porph. *Plot.* 9.

so. We turn next to consider more directly the purposes and methods that united these schools.

As we have already seen, in antiquity, both during the classical period and in the Christian era, philosophy was a way of life. This was certainly Augustine's experience of it. After reading the *Hortensius* he knew that he had encountered something that would demand more than his teachers of rhetoric required. Reading the book altered Augustine from the inside. More than insight, it offered Augustine a new approach to the world; as he later recalled, it changed his affections *(mutauit affectum meum).*[71] We might observe how, if philosophers characteristically understood their life and work this way, certain hermeneutical constraints impose themselves upon contemporary readers of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Augustine, and their disciples. Texts of ancient philosophy need to be interpreted with some insight into the conditions in which they were written. No one has done more to rehabilitate this insight than has Pierre Hadot.[72] Far from pursuing questions merely with a view to technical virtuosity, the way contemporary analytic philosophers sometimes approach their work, ancient philosophy was overwhelmingly concerned with the question of the happy life, with achieving human flourishing, and this by means of intellectual and spiritual disciplines. Theoretical acumen was required, to be sure. But so too was action. In a key chapter of his book *Philosophy as a Way of Life* Hadot identified four themes characterizing the phenomenon of spiritual disciplines,[73] which, taken together, helpfully completes our picture of the goals of ancient philosophical schools and the purposes of philosophical education.

71. *conf.* 3.4.7; CCL 27.30.

72. This hermeneutical principle was elaborated by Hadot for instance in his inaugural lecture to the Collège de France; for discussion of this, see the introduction by Arnold I. Davidson to *Philosophy as a Way of Life,* trans. Michael Chase (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 6–8.

73. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life,* 81–125.

The first heading under which Hadot describes philosophical education is "Learning to Live." Philosophical activity is not merely cognitive, but practical, demanding. What philosophy aims to accomplish is a conversion from inauthentic to authentic existence, from slavery to the passions to mastery and self-control. To achieve this end, philosophical schools, and particularly those among the Stoics, promoted a therapy for the passions. One list of such spiritual exercises given by Philo of Alexandria includes research, reading, attention, indifference. Each of these activities is pursued, not in the advancement of disinterested research, but for the sake of happiness. Another ancient practice is what Hadot calls the discipline of "Dialogue." Here he points not to Zeno but to Socrates as the primary exemplar. As he rightly emphasizes, the Platonic dialogue is a model exercise. It sets a pattern of exchange and invites its reader to join in as a participant. Hence, pedagogically, dialogues are the literary expression of the interior discipline of recollection and interrogation that Plato thought a requirement of self-knowledge. Dialectic is the instrument of every dialogue; and it is through such encounters that the soul can be turned from the sensible world to the intelligible good. Next is "Learning to Die." Will I die well? None of us can escape this question. In the ancient view, all the other exercises (fasting, dialogue, reading) gain coherence when they are cultivated in the awareness of death. Immortalized by the *Phaedo,* Hadot shows how Socrates' own death was the event that founded Platonism as a school; ancient philosophy after Socrates would forever hearken back to that event. The last theme is "Learning How to Read." Hadot notes how modern interpreters are often bemused at the number of logical mistakes that, say, Plato can make in his dialogues. But to impose uniformly literalistic methods of reading is surely a mistake. Ancient texts themselves were intended as spiritual exercises. They were written with specific types of readers and specific types of questions in mind. As such, to

approach them always with the intent of discovering systematized answers is to look for the wrong thing.

On Hadot's analysis, learning to live, to dialogue, to read, and to die are the four practical aims which shape the disciplines common to ancient philosophy. My point is not to endorse the particulars of Hadot's exegesis of ancient authors at every count, but rather to draw attention to the neglected insight which he has done much to retrieve: the ancient school primarily offered an education in virtue. This insight takes on significance when we situate Augustine's own educational program in the context of the classical models of education that were open to him. Anticipating what I will expand on in the next chapter, although Augustine borrows from rhetorical and even grammatical models of education, Cassiciacum conforms most to the philosophical schools of antiquity—though with minor additions.

Having sketched something of the institutional settings of traditional ancient education in its primary, secondary, and tertiary modes, and having reflected on some of the important differences between the goals of rhetorical and philosophical education, including Augustine's own experience of them, we are ready to look at representative Christian responses to this tradition.

Debts to Pagan Education

The immediate effect of Julian's legislation was to provoke a new literature classical in form, but Christian in content. The Church historian Sozomen records one ingenious response:

> Apollinaris employed his great learning and ingenuity in the production of a heroic epic on the antiquities of the Hebrews to the reign of Saul, as a substitute for the poem of Homer. . . . He also wrote comedies in imitation of Menander, tragedies resembling those of Euripides, and odes on the model of Pindar. In short, taking themes of the entire circle of knowledge from the Scriptures, he produced within a very brief space of time, a set of works which in manner, expression, character and arrange-

ment are well approved as similar to Greek literatures and which were equal in number and in force.[74]

Apollinaris's response was an extreme reply to an unprecedented persecution.[75] If Apollinaris's response was extreme, however, it was so not because of its kind, but because of its thoroughness. Already for two centuries, in the East and West, Christians had adopted and extended to their own purposes literary models that had earlier served the ends of classical philosophy and rhetoric. One thinks of Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* or parts of *The Philocalia of Origen* which use the question-and-answer method of a Platonic dialogue in order to lead the reader dialectically to the reasonableness of faith.[76] Or again there is Gregory of Nyssa's *On the Soul and the Resurrection,* consciously mimicking features of the *Phaedo* and *Symposium.* At the beginning of Latin theology we have Minucius Felix's *Octavius,*[77] modeled after Cicero's *De Natura Deorum,* the character Caecilius taking the position of Cotta and Velleius, and Octavius the position of Balbus.[78] St. Ambrose's *De Officiis* takes

74. *Hist. eccl.* 5.18; Chester David Hartranft's trans. in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers,* vol. 2, 2nd ser., 340.

75. That the emperor's edict was regarded as an act of persecution can also be seen, for instance, by the anti-Julian orations it later evoked by Gregory of Nazianzus (*Ors.* 4 and 5). Sozomen attributes this motive to Julian: "His sole motive for excluding the children of Christian parents from instruction in the learning of the Greeks, was because he considered such studies conducive to the acquisition of argumentative and persuasive power" (*Hist. eccl.* 5.18; p. 340), cf. Francis Young's "Classical Genres in Christian Guise; Christian Genres in Classical Guise," in CHCL, 251–52.

76. See, for example, *Philocalia,* 24. Although the title "Philocalia" was given only in the eighteenth century, the selection of extracts was made much earlier by patristic authors; cf. Marguerite Harl's general comments in *Origène* Philocalie 1–20, sur Les écritures, sources chrétiennes 302 (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1983), 33–35.

77. This is Danielou's judgment, though some scholars consider Tertullian to be earlier. Cf. Jean Daniliou's *The Origins of Latin Christianity,* 189; and Ronald H. Heine, "The Beginnings of Latin Christian Literature," in CHCL, 132.

78. See John Henry Freese's introduction to *The Octavius of Minucius Felix* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge), at xix.

not only its tripartite structure from Cicero (dividing the work into three books on the *honestum,* the *utile,* and their relation), but even lifts the title.[79] Then there are the borrowings from classical rhetoric. Passing over the forty-four orations of St.Gregory of Nazianzus and the homilies of St. John Chrysostom, we need only recall that five of the eight major Latin fathers were professional rhetoricians before coming to the faith (Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, and Augustine) and that the remaining three (Ambrose, Hilary, and Jerome), if not professors, were themselves studied rhetoricians.[80] Finally, Jerome's catalogue of ecclesiastical authors and their works, *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis,* illustrates well the self-conscious desire among Christians to construct a heritage that could match the literary achievement of the pagans.[81]

To illustrate how closely Christians could mimic classical forms, we may take up one example in detail, Tertullian's *De Carne Christi* (ca. 206). In this work Tertullian seeks to prove, against Marcion and certain other heretics, that "the flesh of Christ was born of the Virgin and was human" [*carnis in Christo et ex virgine natae et humanae*; 25.1];[82] additionally, he wishes to show how the correct understanding of Christ's body is the foundation for Christian hope in the resurrection of our own flesh [*resurrectio nostrae carnis*; 25.8–9]. In craft-

79. Lest this debt is missed Ambrose resorts to name dropping. He situates his treatment of Christian duties with the following: "Just as Cicero wrote for the instruction of his son, so I too write for your instruction, my sons" (Et sicut Tullius ad erudiendum filium, ita ego quoque ad vos informandos filios meos) (1.24; Davidson, 1.130).

80. See the discussion in George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 146–60.

81. Cf. Young "Classical Genres in Christian Guise," in CHCL, 253; and Mark Vessey on the novelty of *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* in "Jerome and Rufinus," in CHCL, 318–19.

82. Ernest Evans, *Tertullian's Treatise on the Incarnation,* edited with introduction and translation (London: SPCK, 1956), 80.

ing his defense Tertullian assumes the position of the lawyer before the court. He begins with a statement of his central thesis, of its importance, and of the folly of his opponent Marcion (1), from which he develops a biblical argument contradicting the claims of Marcion, Apelles, and the Valentinians (2–16). Tertullian presents his own positive case, citing scriptural texts to illustrate Christ's nativity and actual human flesh (17–23). Finally, he summarizes his main points and reiterates the importance of the doctrine of Christ's flesh to our own resurrection.[83] Here we recall the basic parts into which Cicero believed a well-constructed argument should fall: *exordium, narratio* and *confirmatio,* and *peroratio.*[84] Tertullian's structure follows this model scrupulursly. Beginning with the *exordium* (1), he narrates the opinions of his opponents (2–16), develops his positive argument (17–23), and concludes with a terse summary (24–25).

Noting Tertullian's use of classical rhetoric is instructive for two reasons. To begin, Tertullian's work illustrates (we could equally cite Clement of Alexandria or Justin Martyr on this point) how quickly Christians began to apply and extend the tools of their classical learning to the purposes of apologetic and doctrinal development.[85] This is perhaps obvious. Its significance will emerge, however, once we turn to evaluate St. Augustine's early educational synthesis. (Though Augustine was the first to directly and systematically address the question of Christian education, the practical appropriation of the classical curriculum had begun long before.) Tertullian's example is instructive also because he was an acerbic critic. It is with the weapons of rhetoric and stylistic conceits of pagan education that he at-

83. I have closely followed the analysis offered by Evans in his introduction to *Tertullian's Treatise on the Incarnation,* x–xviii.

84. Cf. Cicero's *Topica* 26.97–100; in *De Inventione* 1:20–109 this division is expanded.

85. Cf. Ronald Sider, *Ancient Rhetoric and the Art of Tertullian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), and Jean-Claude Fredouille, *Tertullian et la conversion de la culture antique* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1972).

tacks pagan education. What is more, historians have not failed to point to the decisive influence that Tertullian had in reviving Roman rhetoric in the third century; it was his own mastery of speech that fired the great Latin theologians of the subsequent generation (such as Cyprian, Arnobius, and Lactantius). And so it is, ironically, that while he admitted no compromise with pagan culture, Tertullian "succeeds as one of the most outstanding translators of elite pagan culture into a Christian vernacular."[86] In this respect, what is true of Tertullian is also true of the Apologists and theologians of the third and fourth centuries.

In addition to borrowing existing literary forms (as we saw in Origen) and rhetorical devices (as we saw in Tertullian), both products of ancient liberal education, Eastern and Western Christians appealed to sources of moral authority already acknowledged within paganism. Here Eastern and Western Christians sometimes differed in strategy. Every Christian writer in our period defended the faith against the charge of novelty, but where Greeks would debate this in relation to history, Romans would more often do so in relation to culture. Greek Fathers, for instance, more typically wish to demonstrate the greater antiquity of Jewish (and by extension Christian) doctrine. The argument runs: ancient man believed in one, not many gods; polytheism is thus an innovation of religious opinion; Christianity is older and therefore superior. Where Plato agrees with the Bible, it is because he borrowed his ideas from it.[87] As Clement of Alexandria reports, even the pagans recognize as much. After all, did not the pagan Pythagorean Platonist Numenius of Apama concede: What is Plato but Moses Atticizing?[88] But where Greek Christians

86. Sara Rappe, "The New Math: How to Add and to Subtract Pagan Elements in Christian Education," 405–32, in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity,* at 410.

87. Justin, *Apology I,* 59–60.

88. Quoted by Clement in *Strom.* 1.150.4; Latins on occasion will also appeal to Jewish antiquity, as does Tertullian at *Ad Nationes* 2.2.5 and *Apologia* 19. For a

defended the superiority of the Bible on account of its antiquity, Latins preferred to stress Christianity's congruence with *Romanitas.*[89] Roman political rule, and the virtues which maintained rule, were demonstrably superior to what was found in previous empires. What Rome lacked, however, was true religion. Rome's excellence was hindered by her idolatry and she could become fully herself only by embracing the true faith.[90] For Ambrose, Latin language itself became a unifying characteristic of Western Christian civilization, by this means distinguishing it from the Barbarian Arians.[91] Though beyond our period under investigation, we note in passing that in

detailed study of early Christian attempts to prove the antiquity of Jewish religion over Greek philosophy, see Arthur J. Droge's *Homer or Moses? Early Christian Interpretation of the History of Culture* (Tubingen: Mohr, 1989).

89. A term that Tertullian may have invented; see *On the Philosopher's Cloak* (4.1). Simon Price observes that Tertullian repeatedly tries to disassociate the success of the Roman Empire from the power of her ancestral gods. For Latin apologists (such as Tertullian and Minucius Felix) Rome has a unique position in universal history. Contrarily, Greek apologists "operate largely without reference to Rome, even in the case of Justin, who is supposed to have been writing from Rome itself." Cf. "Latin Christian Apologists," in *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians,* ed. Mark Edwards, Martin Goodman, and Simon Price (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 127.

90. For instance, in Lactantius's view, even though true justice in the Roman state could only be expected at the return of Christ, the Christianization of Roman legal categories could produce a "provisional golden age, a system under which Christians—and other monotheists—could live as full citizens and under which polytheists would have nothing to fear." Lactantius seeks to translate Christian law into Roman terms. Linking Jesus' summary of the twin commandments of the law (Matt. 22:36–40) with Cicero's conception of natural law, Lactantius applied his Romanized reinterpretation of divine law not only to individuals but to the entire Roman State: "No other Christian author before Lactantius had drawn so heavily on Cicero to attempt such a thoroughgoing discussion of justice or so clearly postulated a Christian empire whose foundation was based on a new understanding of natural law." Cf. Elizabeth De Palma Digeser, *Lactantius and Rome: The Making of a Christian Empire* (London: Cornell University Press, 2000), 59.

91. Cf. *De Sacramentis* 4.5–6, cited by Maura K. Lafferty in "Translating Faith from Greek to Latin: Romanitas and Christianitas in Late 4th Century Rome and Milan," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11, no. 1 (2003): 23.

a famous passage in *De doctrina Christiana* (2.45–46) Augustine moves away from his former bishop's emphasis to deliver one of the first expositions on the futility of *latinitas.* Mastery of the Roman literary legacy, with its canon of texts, conventions of diction, and so on, is seen as practically irrelevant when judged beside the value of discovering the truth of Christ and his Gospel.

Between the second and fourth centuries Christians drank freely from the well of ancient learning. The works surveyed above demonstrate the desire and duty felt among early Christians to draw upon pagan learning, even while rejecting the whole of pagan religion—similar to the way that Christian scholars of the Renaissance revived ancient forms of architecture and music without absorbing the religion which those forms originally meant to serve.[92] Why did the first Christians study the classics? Simply, there was no other education to be had. Whenever Christians sought to communicate either to the faithful or to the unconverted, debate was won or lost, in outline at least, on the terms established by ancient philosophy and classical rhetoric. Great rhetorical effort was expended convincing educated pagans that Christianity was reasonable and moral. Dialogues, orations, and treatises were composed with highly educated pagan (and Christian) audiences in view. On a popular level, rhetorical tools found expression, notably, in the development of the homily. At the hands of bishops such as Chrysostom (347–407) and Augustine the homily became a highly technical, and well-loved, display of Christian eloquence that could reach every class of society.[93] Thus, for the bishops of the fourth century in both scholarly and popular mediums, "the devices of sophistic

92. On this point, see Rudolf Wittkower's essay "The Arts in Western Europe: Italy," in *The New Cambridge Modern History: The Renaissance, 1493–1520,* ed. George Richard Potter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 127–33.

93. From one homily, for example, we hear how Chrysostom tried but failed to stop congregations from applauding in church at the sound of his voice (*Homily on Acts,* 30.4).

rhetoric had become the cues to which their audiences responded and by which their purposes could be best accomplished."[94]

Both before and after the Edict of Milan Eastern and Western Christians had accustomed themselves to extensive borrowing from the tools of rhetoric and the methods of philosophy. While this image of early Christian adaptation is correct, it requires some qualification. For we find not only addition but subtraction in their effort at finding the right sum.

Subtractions from Pagan Education

Two trends within early Christian educational thought cannot be readily traced back to classical forms. Both concern the reordering of the classical curriculum. The first is the displacement of philosophy with exegesis as the highest discipline; the second is the genesis of monasticism. These educational impulses within the Church had an effect upon Augustine prior to his conversion and are sources that we shall have to take into account when looking at his development of a distinctively Christian educational ideal.

In the first place, where Christians continued to endorse the study of the liberal arts they considered them primarily as a propaedeutic not to philosophy but to biblical exegesis. Most Christians thought the arts incompatible with their own faith. What did shift was the goal toward which the arts were directed; with the coming of Christ, the purposes of liberal education had to be redefined. Although St. John Chrysostom (ca. 349–407) appears to have been the first to use the term "Christian philosophy,"[95] since Justin Martyr Christians had become accustomed to presenting their religion as a superior *philosophy* (cf. *Dial. Tryph.* 8.1).[96] Similarly, when Ta-

94. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric,* 145.

95. *Homilia in Kalendas,* 3; PG 48.956, cf. Jean-Yves Lacoste, "Philosophy," in Lacoste, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Christian Theology* (London: Routledge, 2005), 3.1234–42.

96. There Justin calls Christianity "a unique philosophy, sure and profitable"

tian (110–180) tried to prove that Moses was older than Homer, he did so with the view of establishing the greater authority of "our philosophy" (ἡμετέραν φιλοσοφίαν).[97] Integrating the best in both Jewish Law and Greek learning, Christian philosophy possesses a wisdom surpassing both. To these writers, Christian philosophy is, in short, the sum total of biblical truth rightly understood.

On this view theological interpretation of the Bible becomes the apex of study. One consequence of this shift is the development of sophisticated methods of biblical exegesis, as we find for instance, in Origen.[98] It is profitable for us here to consider his presentation of the purpose of liberal education.

Although Origen considered himself primarily a biblical exegete, he did not thereby disparage philosophy or the liberal arts. On the contrary, in a text now preserved in the *Philocalia* Origen positively encouraged Christian students to study the liberal arts and philosophy, and then to put them in the service of theological hermeneutics:[99]

(μόνην…φιλοσοφίαν ἀσφαλῆ…καὶ σύμφορον); Philippe Bobichion, *Justin Martyr: Dialogue avec Tryphon,* édition critique, vol. 1, introduction, texte grec, traduction (Fribourg: Academic Press, 2003), 204.

97. *Homilia in Kalendas,* 3; PG 48.956; Molly Whittaker, ed. and trans., *Tatian: Oratio ad Graecos,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 56.

98. As Edwards has noted: "Though fragments survive of Clement's *Hypotyposes,* together with long extracts from the commentaries and Biblical dissertations of Hippolytus, we possess no earlier specimens of Christian exegesis that are so long and comprehensive—so Philonic, we might say—as those of Origen"; see *Origen against Plato,* 133.

99. *Philocalia* 13.1–2, Joseph Armitage Robinson, *The Philocalia of Origen,* revised text with introduction and indices (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893), 64–65; Roberts and Donaldson's translation, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers* vol. 4, 10.295–97, with my emendation. Chapter 13 of the *Philocalia,* from which this excerpt is taken, is a short letter (ca. 235) to Gregory (later bishop of Caesarea) on the right use of learning. Cf. Henri Crouzel's comments in *Grégoire le Thaumaturge, remerciement à Origène. Lettre d'Origène à Grégoire,* Sources Chrétiennes 148 (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1969), 79–92.

For this reason I would urge you also to take up from Greek philosophy such liberal disciplines and preliminary studies[ἐγκύκλια μαθήματα ἢ προπαιδεύματα] as can be turned to a Christian purpose [χριστιανισμὸν], and also those elements of astronomy and geometry that will be profitable for the exposition of the sacred writings. The children of the philosophers speak of geometry and music and grammar and rhetoric and astronomy as being ancillary to philosophy; and in the same way we might speak of philosophy itself as being ancillary to Christian purposes.

Origen illustrates how this use of the liberal arts and philosophy is analogically prefigured in the Jews' spoiling of the Egyptians:

It is something of this sort perhaps that is enigmatically indicated in the directions God is represented in the Book of Exodus as giving to the children of Israel. They are directed to beg from their neighbours and from those dwelling in their tents vessels of silver and of gold, and raiment; thus they are to spoil the Egyptians, and to obtain materials for making the things they are told to provide in connection with the worship of God.

"Philosophy" here is effectively relegated to the status of another liberal art. Alongside astronomy, geometry, and the other encyclical studies, Origen's reconfiguration of the structure of knowledge sets philosophy to work as the helpmate of exegesis. Origen may guarantee the position of philosophy within the Christian curriculum, but he does so at the cost of diminishing its significance. As one commentator has put it: "Origen advises us to take from the secular culture only what is useful for the interpretation of the Scriptures."[100]

Where Origen commends philosophy and the arts as useful to biblical study, Lactantius approaches the same conclusion from the opposite direction. Also wishing to encourage the study of rhetoric and philosophy, in the *Divine Institutes* Lactantius emphasizes not

100. "Origène conseille de prendre dans la culture profane *seulement* ce qui est utile pour l'interprétation des Écritures"; Harl, *Origène Philocalie, 1–20, sur les écritures,* 400.

philosophy's power but its impotence. Only faith, and unlike philosophy, can produce true virtue in the soul. In 302 Lactantius traveled from Africa to settle in Nicomedia, at that time emperor Diocletian's center of administration. As a publically appointed teacher of rhetoric,[101] Lactantius was well placed to offer a defense of Christianity, which he did and for which he subsequently lost his post. Considering philosophy's claim to deliver wisdom, he contrasts the weakness of the philosophers with the strength of the Word of God (Augustine will do likewise in his *De vera religione* 1.1). As a student of the liberal arts himself, Lactantius recognizes that many skills are needed for philosophy; he cites the standard list of preparatory arts—grammar, rhetoric, geometry, music, astrology—to criticize not the curriculum per se but rather the value that pagans had come to attach to it.[102]

Unlike Augustine, Lactantius never judged teaching rhetoric to be incompatible with Christian faith. This helps explain why his two-pronged critique of liberal education is aimed more toward philosophy than it is at rhetoric. Lactantius observes, first, that phi-

101. *Div. inst.* 5.2; Jer. *De vir. ill.* 80. Beyond being paid from the public purse and teaching, the precise functions an appointed rhetorician had are not clear. Lactantius must have had considerable connection with Diocletians's court, at least insofar as he was able to anticipate the emperor's change in disposition toward Christians. He could relate, for instance, how Diocletian and Galerius had met in closed-door meetings to discuss the place of Christians within the empire (*De mort. pers.* 11); he was present, moreover, when two of Diocletian's advisors, one a philosopher and one a governor, began to give public lectures attacking Christianity's tolerated presence within the empire (*Div. inst.* 5.2–4). For discussion of the political context in which Lactantius worked and wrote, see Elizabeth DePalma Digeser, *The Making of a Christian Empire: Lactantius and Rome* (London: Cornell University Press, 2000), 1–10; for helpful background on the changing role of orators between the republican and empire periods, see Catherine Steel's *Roman Oratory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 3–24, and Laurent Pernot, trans. Higgins, *Rhetoric in Antiquity* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 128–35.

102. *Div. inst.* 3.25.11.

losophy is too aristocratic. Even if it could produce happiness, its intellectual demands (i.e., mastery of the liberal arts) and its social prerequisite (i.e., sufficient leisure and wealth) unfairly disqualify swaths of human beings from the enterprise.[103] As Cicero rightly had said, philosophy abhors crowds.[104] Lactantius accepts Cicero's judgment of the inevitable elitism of philosophy; but even if philosophy should produce happiness, it could never be a means of *universal* salvation. More to the point, on Lactantius's view philosophy fails even the clever. The second horn of his critique is the sharper:

> The philosophers realised under the demand of nature what had to be done, but they could not do it themselves and they did not see it could not be done by philosophers: the teaching of heaven alone accomplishes this, because it alone is wisdom.[105]

Philosophers have been incapable of achieving true virtue in their own lives; they have been incapable of inspiring virtue in others. Even where philosophers did happen to teach the truth about the human good, they lacked authority. Only the true religion could evoke unusual obedience, enjoyed now by the Church.[106]

To these the desert fathers added their own subtractions. Through their words, deeds, and patterns of living, fourth- and fifth-century monastic fathers produced what might be called a rival form of Christian paideia. Consciously abandoning what they judged to be the poverty of urban sophistication, in addition to biblical commen-

103. *Div. inst.* 3.25.10–18.

104. *Div. inst.* 3.25.12; cf. *Tusc.* 2.4.

105. "Quod ergo illi poscente natura faciendum esse senserunt sed tamen neque ipsi facere potuerunt neque a philosophis fieri posse uiderunt, sola haec efficit doctrina caelestis, quia sola sapientia est" (*Div. inst.* 3.26.1; CSEL 19.259). Translation by Sr. Mary Francis McDonald, *Lactantius: The Divine Institutes, Books 1–7,* FC 49 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1964), 223 (adapted).

106. *Div. inst*. 3.27.1.

tary, the monks sought to produce an education that trained students in virtue and provided access to the secrets of the heart. The desert became the place where men spent their lives probing the wellsprings of human action. This new Christian training was celebrated in biographies, such as St. Athanasius's *Life of St. Antony,* in collected sayings, like the *Apopthegmata Patrum,* and in the works of individual monks like Evagrius and St. Jerome (who both in a certain manner rejected their classical education). Having said as much, we need to bear in mind these qualifications. Certainly we are not dealing with a systematized "school." For one thing, the desert fathers did not establish a set of institutions that parodied, say, the gymnasium, or the Academy of antiquity. Looking forward, neither can we imagine a community with cloisters, massive land-holdings, and a fixed regiment of study and prayer—as we do find within later Western monasticism.[107] Moreover, the teachings of the early desert fathers were transmitted mostly by oral tradition, only secondary through texts. The *Apopthegmata Patrum,* for instance, focuses primarily on monastic leaders in lower Egypt who were active between the 330s and the 460s. Their sayings were transmitted and then set to writing likely in the late fifth century, and in multiple languages (Greek, Syriac, Sahidic Coptic, Bohairic Coptic, Georgian, Etheopic, Armenian, and Latin). It was through these texts, collected not in Egypt but in Palestine, that their lives and teachings reached the rest of the Christian world.

Nevertheless, with these qualifications in mind, the desert fathers did offer a model for education that rivaled the dominant and

107. As is noted, for instance, by William Harmless, S.J., *Desert Christians: An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 174–75; on the social and economic interaction of the early desert fathers with their surrounding culture, see James E. Goehring's chapter "The World Engaged: The Social and Economic World of Early Egyptian Monasticism," 39–52, in his work *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1999).

traditional methods. Thus, in the *Sayings of the Fathers,* a frequent theme is the conflict between the urban intellectual traditions and the new unlettered learning. Some monks were unlettered. St. Antony's (ca. 251–356) illiteracy, for example, became famous and celebrated among these writers.[108] Others came to the desert leaving behind them a sophisticated Hellenistic education. Here we might point to Evagrius (345–399), who had left the company of the Cappadocians to find his home in the desert of Nitria (50 km southeast of Alexandria), or Arsenius (ca. 360–449), formerly tutor to the sons of Emperor Theodosius I. In the following excerpt Fr. Arsenius admonishes the brothers on the spiritual dangers of too much book-learning. The scene is a small group of young men, highly educated in the liberal arts, who have come to Fr. Arsenius impressed by the unstudied wisdom of the more simple fathers:[109]

Someone said to blessed Arsenius: "How is it that we, with all our education and our wide knowledge get no-where [παιδεύσεως καὶ σοφίας οὐδὲν ἔχομεν] while these Egyptian peasants acquire so many virtues?" Abba Arsenius said to him, "We indeed get nothing from our secular education, but these Egyptian peasants acquire the virtues by hard work."

108. Traditionally portrayed as illiterate, it should be noted that Antony's illiteracy may have been invented. After all, Athanasius himself acknowledged that Antony sent letters to Emperor Constantine and his sons. At least two other accounts mention Antony as an author. In the *First Greek Life of Pachomius,* upon hearing of Pachomius's death, Antony is reported to have sent one letter of consolation to Pachomius's community and one to Athanasius. Most importantly, at *De viris* 88 (A.D. 392) Jerome mentions that Antony wrote seven letters (in Coptic) that had been translated into Greek. The case for Antony's literacy is made by Samuel Rubenson in his *The Letters of St. Antony: Origenist Theology, Monasticism Tradition and the Making of a Saint* (Lund, Sweden: University of Lund Press, 1990); for a critical discussion of Rubenson's claims, see Graham Gould, "Recent Work on Monastic Origins: A Consideration of Questions Raised" by Samuel Rubenson's *The Letters of St. Antony*, *Studia Patristica* 25 (1993): 405–16.

109. The *Apopthegamata Patrum* are preserved in PG 65, 72A–440D. This excerpt is at 88D–89A, Benedicta Ward's translation, *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection* (Kalamazoo, Wis.: Cistercian Publications, 1984), 10.

One day Abba Arsenius consulted an old Egyptian monk about his own thoughts. Someone noticed this and said to him, "Abba Arsenius, how is it that you with such a good Latin and Greek education, ask this peasant about your thoughts?" He replied, "I have indeed been taught Latin and Greek, but I do not know even the alphabet of this peasant."

Along these lines, St. Jerome is perhaps the best-known example of a late antique man who tried to cast aside his education in search for God. Instructive in this regard is his *Epistle* 107 (403 A.D.), *Ad Laetam de instititione filiae,* a diatribe against the corruption of liberal education. In this letter he combats the tradition not with scorn but with a heavy silence. Written to one Laeta, whose daughter has been dedicated as a virgin for service in the Church, Jerome's letter charts the path for her daughter's future education. The hours of the day would revolve around manual labor, prayer, and the memorization of the Scriptures in Greek and Latin (9–10). As Rome's temples stand ignored (2), so also ought the conquest of true religion be demonstrated by our neglect of worldly wisdom (4). In place of lists of mythic gods, Jerome asks Laeta to have her daughter memorize lists of the Apostles (4).[110] Like Quintilian, Jerome pays great attention to the details of early education: the use of songs, games, and spirit of friendly competition among companions is the best way to teach children (4). Christians are made not born! [*Fiunt, non nascuntur Christiani;* 1].[111] Like other great pagan educators, Jerome singles out *imitation* as the key psychological principle relevant to educating youth (4). One begins to wonder whether or not his passing over the rival tradition in silence is not, however, a pyrrhic victory. His total disregard of liberal learning leaves the reader unable to put together the two traditions of education—and gives the impression that one must take all or nothing from the classics. Jerome,

110. Even though Jerome disparages worldly learning, inasmuch as he desires Christian children to learn to read the Bible, he continues to recommend grammatical studies, as he does in a letter on education *Ad Pacatulam* (A.D. 413), *ep.* 78.1.

111. *Select Letters of St. Jerome,* LCL 262.340.

apparently, would have the Bible replace secular literature and the liberal disciplines in their entirety. Taken on its own, Jerome's letter offers a striking example of one Christian attempt to imagine a curriculum without the liberal arts.

But that is not the whole story. Read in isolation this letter gives a rather misleading impression; in reality Jerome's relation to the classics is as complex as it is emblematic.

Mention should be given of his famous dream, his response, and his later reinterpretation of its message.[112] By Jerome's own account, it was while traveling to Jerusalem (likely in mid-Lent 374) that he fell ill with a fever. In this condition he dreamt that he was brought before the seat of the heavenly judge and asked to state his condition. Upon declaring himself to be a Christian, the judge replied: "Ciceronianus es, non Christianus," and orders him to be flogged.[113] In shame Jerome then promised never again to read the books of the gentile authors (*gentilium litterarum libros*), and that if he should fail this, he will have denied the Lord (*si legero, te negavi*).[114] Jerome took the dream as prophetic. After relating this episode he testifies in this same letter to Eustochium (*ep*. 22, dated 384) that to this day he has remained more zealous to the Word of God than he ever was to secular literature. Moreover, in the prologue to his *Commentary on Galatians,* he testifies to not having read Cicero, Virgil, or any pagan author for more than fifteen years. There is no reason to doubt the veracity of Jerome's account of the dream or the sincerity of his initial response. What we do find, however, is that he was unwilling to keep to a strict interpretation of its meaning. A few years later (in A.D. 400) Rufinus teased Jerome because he had not lived up to his promise, to which he answered that one is not

112. For a fuller treatment, see Harold Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics* (Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1958), 312–28.

113. Cic. *ep.* 22.30

114. *Select Letters of St. Jerome,* LCL 262.126–28.

bound to promises made while asleep. Most importantly, Jerome defends his mature view of the relation of Christians to the classics in a later letter (*ep*. 70). Similar to Augustine's later view, there we are told that as the Israelites benefited from the capture of Gentiles (cf. Deut. 21:10–13), so also Christians can use secular literature, when properly edited, to their own benefit (*ep*. 70.2).[115]

Though Jerome appears to have reconciled himself to a discerning appreciation of the classics, his epistle *Ad Laetam* nevertheless illustrates the lengths to which Christians were willing to distance themselves from their own literary past. Among the Greek fathers, writing a few decades earlier, St. Basil apparently did not suffer from such bad dreams.

Ad Adulescentes: St. Basil's Early Synthesis

The most systematic presentation of how the tools of classical education could be integrated so as to serve the purposes of Christian theology before Augustine is, undoubtedly, St. Basil's (329–379) *Ad Adulescentes.* A short treatise written near the end of his life, the piece was possibly intended for his younger nephews and for the clergy under his charge.[116] In contrast to Jerome, Basil represents the broader patristic tradition, which forthrightly accepted the need to adapt and assimilate the tools of classical learning. The heart of his view is captured in the traditional simile, here applied to education: "It is therefore in accordance with the whole likeness of bees that you must share in the writings of the pagans."[117] Chris-

115. Details of Jerome's dream and his subsequent views on secular literature, with reference to primary and secondary literature, are concisely set out in J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London: Duckworth, 1975), 41–44.

116. For an introduction to Basil's life and thought, and an analysis of *Ad Adulescentes,* see Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), especially 48–57.

117. *Adul*. 4.8; LCL 270.390.

tians are to take what is useful in the pagans and leave the rest; passing over immoral images of the poets, and corrupt admonitions of the orators, students should drink deeply of that part of the pagan literature that is an agreement with the Bible. There is no question: The Bible is superior. Any image of virtue presented in the pagan texts can be found to a more excellent degree in the Scriptures.[118] For what reason, then, does St. Basil recommend their study?

His argument in favor of the selective consumption of the classics moves in three steps. The first two define the limits of their value, the final step their positive contribution. First, Basil establishes the dogmatic presupposition that he believes all Christians must bring to their study: the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Every pagan treatment of virtue is to be read against this interpretive backdrop. Where the original classical author might not assume the possibility of eternal life, Christians must. This allows Basil, for instance, to draw upon Homer as a source of moral teaching even though it is unclear whether Homer believed in personal awareness after death.[119] Second, Basil affirms that the understanding and exercise of virtue is the necessary (though not sufficient) condition of human salvation. Two Socratic themes running through pagan literature thus recommend themselves, the care of the soul (τῆς ψυχῆς ἐπιμέλειαν), and spiritual purification (κάθαρσις δὲ ψυχῆς).[120] Throughout *Ad Adulescentes* Basil instructs readers on how to read the history of Greek poetry, rhetoric, and philosophy through the double lens of these Platonic themes. Through this lens noble Greeks can be emulated, as imperfect figures pointing to Christ.[121]

Having established these limiting criteria (according to which pagan writings are to be appropriated), Basil then sets out, posi-

118. *Adul.* 8.1–2; 4.5–7; 10.1.
119. *Adul.* 2.3; 4.2.
120. *Adul.* 9.1; 2.7–8, and 9.7.
121. As, for instance, when Pericles and Socrates are cited for their occasional practice of nonresistance against enemies (7.1–10).

tively, the reasons why an imperfect literature is good for young students. A gap separates the young from the spiritual sublimity of the Bible. Whenever the Bible leads one to salvation, it achieves this by instructing the mind in divine mysteries. The educational question presents itself thus: What sort of Christian education can overcome this asymmetry? What literature can prepare a man to read, to understand, and to act upon the mysteries attested to in the Bible? The primary educational question asked in *Ad Adulscentes* does not concern final but efficient causality; Basil is asking about the nature of pedagogy and the means most suited to advancing perfection within the believer's soul. His answer, of course, is that we already possess a literature suited to this function, in the classics. From the point of view of Christian revelation, these books speak in shadows and reflections; they are duller representations of the luminous truth, but for that reason more suitable for beginners. Being more elementary, the lessons of the classics are easier to grasp. Exercise in pagan literature stands to biblical study as do military games to the strains and risks of actual battle. In a word, pagan literature can prepare the intellect and groom the affections so as to be more ready to receive the Gospel. And, in case this worries some, Basil reminds us of the biblical precedent to which he appeals: Moses and Daniel also mastered pagan literatures, and then pillaged them as required. There is no reason why we could not do the same.[122]

St. Basil and Two Hellenistic Critiques

My purpose in discussing St. Basil of Caesarea is not to suggest his direct influence on Augustine.[123] I draw attention to *Ad Adules-*

122. *Adul.* 2.5; 2.6; 3.3–4.

123. Though it has been the subject of some debate, it is extremely difficult to trace any direct influence of St. Basil's writings upon Augustine. It has been suggested that Augustine read the Cappadocians on Trinitarian doctrine, for example, in Rufinus of Aquileia's translation of Gregory's *Orations*; I am not aware of

centes because of any patristic treatment of education this comes closest to Augustine's in its scope and in its evaluation of the purposes of secular learning. In claiming this, however, I am aware that some interpreters see little that is distinctively Christian in Basil's treatment (and by implication, that a comparable critique could be leveled against Augustine). Sarra Rappe, for instance, has recently argued that St. Basil's conception of "Christian" education is essentially a rewriting of earlier Stoic critiques of the liberal arts.[124] With a view to the generic question of what qualifies an education as "Christian," as well as to its specific applications in Basil and Augustine, it is worth taking up Rappe's objection.

As we have already established, by the beginning of the Christian era the tradition of the *artes liberales* had been established as a highly developed and widely implemented system of education in the Greco-Roman world. As I have tried to illustrate, Christians both adopted and set aside the tools of that education as they saw fit. In light of Rappe's objection, our account would be incomplete, nonetheless, without mentioning two critiques of the theory of liberal education that preceded the Fathers, found in Seneca and Sextus Empiricus.

Seneca (4 B.C.–65 A.D.) wishes to recapture the language of the liberal arts for philosophy. Only that study that makes one truly free is worthy of the name *liberal* arts. The only study that fulfills this ambition is moral philosophy, the study of good and evil. The arts conventionally designated "liberal," therefore, he takes to be neither productive of virtue nor strictly necessary to its achievement. After listing a series of virtues (*fortitudo, fides, temperantia,*

anyone's claim to Augustine's knowledge of Basil's *Ad Adulescentes.* On the Cappadocian's influence on Augustine Lewis Ayres writes: "In all these [possible] cases it has proved difficult to find any compelling textual evidence, and it has been suggested that the attribution of such influence is actually unnecessary to account for Augustine's formulations," "The Cappadocians," in AE, 123.

124. See, for instance, "The New Math: How to Add and to Subtract Pagan Elements in Christian Education," in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity,* 411.

and *humanitas*) as well as the characteristic deeds that they inspire, Seneca asks: *numquid liberalia studia hos mores praecipiunt*?[125] Do liberal studies import to men good character? They contribute to virtue only in the same sense that milk and cheese do contribute to virtue. Which is to say that they contribute to the preconditions of moral life, not to its substance. As his critique unfolds we find that Seneca will not give even this much. Indeed, whereas human excellence requires at least a few bags of flour, wisdom can flourish in the total absence of books.[126] Seneca is the proto-Rousseau who fears the contagion of oversophistication. To illustrate just how badly the arts can go wrong, Seneca relates the ignoble career of one scholar, Didymus. Writing over four thousand books, the man is an exemplar of intellectual intemperance. In Seneca's view the ruin of Didymus is a parable for every age. By failing to restrain his curiosity, the mind of Didymus unraveled in an ocean of triviality. Those who do like him become troublesome, wordy, and tactless bores.[127]

What, then, is the good of the arts? While highly critical of the arts, at other points in this same *Epistle* 88 we discover there are some purposes to which they can contribute. Not directly educating the soul in virtue, Seneca nonetheless admits that the arts benefit a person in the "equipment of life."[128] They make possible the achievement of certain instrumental goods, like wealth or shelter. These *instrumenta vitae* may in turn be put at the service of *virtus*. In a telling image he likens the liberal studies to a blade that cuts through the untilled soil of a young man's soul. Neither planting the seeds nor reaping its fruits, at their best the arts can render the soul more hospitable to virtue at a future time. Seneca locates the liberal disciplines beneath philosophy with reference to Posidonius's four-

125. *ep.* 88.30; LCL 76.366.
126. "sine liberalibus studiis venire ad sapientiam posse" (88.32; LCL 76.368).
127. *ep*. 88.37.
128. "ad instrumenta vitae plurimum conferunt"; *ep.* 88.20; LCL 76.369.

fold classification of the arts. First are the common arts *(volgares)* belonging to manual works, farmers, and the like; second are the arts aiming at enjoyment *(ad voluptatem)* of the eyes and ears;[129] third are those arts belonging to boys' education, the preparatory studies that correspond to the Greek circle of studies (ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία). In this scheme Seneca reserves the title of the liberal arts to another study altogether for the reason that only those whose concern is virtue are rightly called liberal. In short, he criticizes the traditional arts so as to reorder their position within the hierarchy of knowledge. Moral philosophy, the study of good and evil, alone can make men truly free and truly happy. He concludes the epistle with a fitting exhortation: *Stude, non ut plus aliquid scias, sed ut melius.*[130]

If Seneca diminished the prestige of the liberal arts in order to allow the luster of moral philosophy to shine brighter, Sextus Empiricus (writing ca. 200 A.D.) thought there was no light to see. His list of the arts is similar to the one Seneca is familiar with (though he adds dialectic); he also accepts the same traditional triple division of philosophy into its physical, logical, and moral branches. Yet, for Sextus neither directly, nor as a preamble to philosophy, do the arts help to liberate the young.

At the opening of his *Adversus Mathematicos* Sextus Empiricus identifies his objections with those of the School of Pyrro.[131] As was attempted by the Pyrrhonian School, Sextus promises to de-

129. *ep.* 88.22; LCL 76.362. 130. *ep.* 89.23; LCL 76.394.

131. This is to distinguish his objections from those given by Epicurus. While Sextus considers Epicurus to have rightly concluded that the subjects of the arts do not lead a person to wisdom, Epicurus did this for the wrong reasons. Sextus lists three purported reasons for Epicurus's conclusions, none of which he rules out: Epicurus may have disregarded such studies out of a sense of his own cultural inadequacy *(apaideusias)* generally; he may have been jealous of the wide learning of Plato and Aristotle specifically; or, he may have simply wished to defame his former teacher, Nausiphanes, who had been devoted to the arts, so as to make himself appear a more original thinker (1.1–2). The School of Pyrrho, on the other hand, was never moved by these motives.

liver a frank, rational investigation into the principles of education, so as to demonstrate why it is that the liberal arts are incapable of delivering on their promise. Fundamentally, the liberal arts do not contribute to wisdom because there are *no* subjects that contribute to wisdom. Sextus begins his deconstruction by dividing the parts of education under four headings. If learning should exist, then it would be the outcome of a relation between the *subject* taught, the *teacher* who instructs, the *student* who learns, and the particular *method* that brings this learning about.[132] The next four chapters of his text go on to explain in detail why he believes that neither of these parts of the educational activity exists. For Sextus, there is literally no teacher, and no student. We capture his reasoning with the following:

> Since some of them stoutly assert that these [incorporeal] things exist, others that they do not exist, while still others suspend judgment. Thus, it is absurd to say that things which are undecided and subjects of unsettled controversy are taught, as though they were unanimously agreed upon and not disputed.[133]

When faced with a series of apparently intractable claims about matters of fundamental importance to the theory of education, Sextus claims it is better to suspend one's judgment rather than to fall into error. Augustine will attempt to answer these objections to the possibility of education in his reply to the skeptics, *Contra Academicos*, which we shall look at later.

Having surveyed these two Hellenistic critiques, I think Rappe's judgment of Basil's treatment is unfair.[134] Though common themes unite St. Basil's treatise with Seneca's *Epistle* 88, it is hardly right to

132. Sext. Emp. *Math.* 1.7; 1.9.

133. Sext. Emp. *Math.*1.28; LCL 382.18–19, trans. R. G. Bury.

134. Incidentally, Rappe's evaluation also is anomalous when compared to the text's subsequent history of reception among later fathers such as St. John Damascene. Though less influential than Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana,* Basil's *Ad Adulescentes* was also to become significant in the sixteenth-century Renais-

interpret Basil's transformation of the course of liberal education as "no more than a Christian reiteration of such [ancient] *topoi*"[135]—unless, of course, stress is laid on the qualifying adjective, *Christian*. For St. Basil the educational center has shifted.[136] The substance of the liberal arts do not merely need to be renamed (as Seneca suggested), they have to be reconfigured so as to serve the ends of a new dogmatic structure. As E. L. Fortin once observed, if there is anything to be learned from Basil's letter, it is that the use of pagan literature as a propaedeutic to faith requires "not so much the appropriation of the old values as their transmutation in accordance with the demands of the Gospel."[137] As I shall argue, this is essentially the same difference that marks off Augustine's view from earlier pagan writings. Moreover, in Basil's opinion, the old education retains a positive, protective function which it does not for Seneca. In a telling image Basil calls ancient letters the leaves that shade the fruit of Scripture; they are the first dye to be applied to the wool if the true color is to hold later.[138] The sum of ancient philosophy, literature, and the liberal arts are thus a protective covering. The clas-

---

sance. These and other references can be found in Roy Joseph Deferrari and Martin Rawson Patrick McGuire's introduction in *The Letters of Saint Basil,* LCL 270.371.

135. Rappe, "The New Math: How to Add and to Subtract Pagan Elements in Christian Education," 411.

136. As Rousseau points out, the criterion for judgment upon what is and is not useful within the classics depends, for Basil, upon a prior conception of virtue and of the end of man: "The student was recommended merely to discover examples, which would support a set of moral values already acquired elsewhere." Furthermore, while Basil and the Stoics both emphasize virtue, the confidence of the soul's capacity for divinization is derived from elsewhere: "The confidence, of course, was that of Origen, and of a Christian tradition that had reinforced in its own terms the tentative optimism of the ancient sources." Cf. *Basil of Caesarea,* 53–54.

137. Ernest L. Fortin, "Hellenism and Christianity in Basil the Great's *Ad Adulescentes,*" 189–203, in *Neoplatonism and Early Christian Thought: Essays in Honor of A. H. Armstrong,* ed. Henry J. Blumenthal and Robert A. Markus (London: Variorum Publications, 1981), 199.

138. Basil *Adul.* 3.2; 2.8.

sics provide an elementary wisdom, a preparation, which, though less dignified than Scripture, serves the process of transmission of divine knowledge. Finally, where Basil assumes a fundamental continuity between the accounts of virtue in Homer and the Bible, hardly the same can be said of Seneca's view of the relationship between liberal studies and moral philosophy.

Conclusion

I have tried to illustrate something of the variety of early Christian responses to the pagan liberal arts tradition. The patristic reception of classical learning was marked both by appropriation and critique, a series of additions and subtractions. Christian attack on the efficacy of pagan philosophy (and by extension the whole of *paideia* that led up to it) was both similar and dissimilar to certain Stoic and Epicurean critiques of ancient education. Like these schools, the Fathers also discredited philosophy's traditional claim to deliver happiness. Unlike these schools, Christians did not infer that metaphysical doctrines as such were irrelevant to the discovery of the happy life. Literary forms, rhetorical tools, and select moral *topoi* were all adapted by Christian writers to suit the purposes of apologetic and doctrinal development, and each of the major Fathers I have discussed, East and West, were thoroughly indebted to classical education, even when they sought to disabuse that education through their own inspired polemic.

Having surveyed key patristic responses to the tradition of classical education, we turn directly to St. Augustine's original account of how that tradition can be integrated within a Christian vision. Since my aim is to show how Augustine conceives of education as an extension of his moral theology, we begin by setting his early moral theology in the context of two sources in relation to which he articulated his Christian Platonism: Ciceronian skepticism and Manichean dualism.

CHAPTER 2

Education in Augustine's Moral Theology

IF I AM TO succeed at demonstrating how the purposes for liberal education are established within the context of Augustine's early moral theology, then some preliminary account of that theology is in order. From the start to the last Augustine remained a polemicist. A majority of his works were developed in response to some one or other perceived threat to Catholic orthodoxy and the unity of the flock. His early expositions of the nature of moral theology are no exception. Because of this feature of his development, one point of entry into Augustine's ideas on the good of man is to approach our topic with a view to the competing alternatives that Augustine saw before him, and rejected, or at least modified. At Cassiciacum Augustine subscribed to the bold but somewhat naïve assurance that whatever he should find in the Platonists, at least insofar as this relates to subtle philosophical questions, would be in ultimate conformity with the Scriptures.[1] His early position was that context could account for points of contrast: philosophy was directed toward the few, whereas Christ preached to all.[2]

For this reason, I suggest, the study of Augustine's early Platonism

1. *c. Acad* 3.20.43.
2. *ord.* 2.5.16; *vera rel.* 2.2.

is not necessarily the most suitable point of entry into his moral theology. Augustine's debt to Neoplatonism is enormous, to be sure. What is more, the nature and extent of that debt has been explored many times; as one authoritative account has it, no understanding of his religion is possible "without regard to the Platonist foundation upon which all his thinking is built."[3] But in this chapter I wish to sketch an account of his early moral theology by investigating features of the (polemical) setting from out of which that theology, and by extension his theory of education, developed. What I wish to do is not so much to retell *Confessions,* book 7, as to sketch out how Augustine chose to articulate elements of his Christian Platonism in response to two key influences: Ciceronian educational philosophy and Manichean religion. These merit our attention because each one had an early influence on Augustine, and, importantly for our purposes, after his conversion to Platonic metaphysics and Catholic Christianity, Augustine formulated his new understanding of the end of human life *in relation to* these alternatives. We see, for instance, that Augustine's appraisal of Cicero's early influence is mixed. Cicero's call to philosophy enflamed a love for truth in the young man, but Cicero's skepticism extinguished any hope that this expectation could be satisfied. We see also how Mani's dualistic concept of nature would be the foil against which Augustine would develope his own understanding of the Christian view of sin and creation.

Taking into account Augustine's early use of Cicero, I consider first the ways which Augustine adopted and corrected Cicero's vision of philosophical education. I show that while Augustine's eudaimonism leads him to cast his own discussion within a Ciceronean philosophical and educational framework, his reasons for positing happiness as a motive to seek wisdom, particularly as expressed in *De beata vita* and *Soliloquia,* came about only after

3. John Burnaby, *Amor Dei: A Study in the Religion of St. Augustine* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1938), 25.

a drastic reappraisal of the educational advice he culled from the *Hortensius.* Lacking metaphysical certainty regarding the nature of the soul and its highest object of aspiration, Cicero the educator was unable to support the hope required to sustain an educational inquiry into the truth. While Augustine exhorts his own students to the love of truth, he does this on the basis of an explicitly Trinitarian metaphysical structure which, he believes, makes possible the virtue of *hope.* More briefly, I then show how Augustine articulated the good of created substances in opposition to Manichean dualism. With Augustine's critique of skepticism and dualism in view, I conclude by offering a synopsis of the structure of Augustine's early moral theology particularly as we find it represented in his *De beata vita* and *De sermone Domini in monte.* But before turning to Cicero, it will be helpful to situate both Augustine's educational practice against the background of the ancient schools, and his moral theology more broadly within the classical tradition of eudaimonistic ethics.

Cassiciacum and Traditional Education

How far in his theory and practice did Augustine keep or divert from elements of the older liberal education? I wish here only to touch upon themes that will then come up later in the midst of my more detailed discussion of individual texts.

In Augustine's early writings we find elements of traditional classical education alongside novel features. Having in mind the threefold sequence of ancient education we may begin with observations concerning grammar. At Cassicicacum all members (save Monica) are literate. They come to the villa already having passed through an elite cultural formation that brought them literacy and some familiarity with the classics. All this is taken for granted and forms the background to the drama and discussion of the dialogues. Augustine shows no qualms about using classical texts in

his school, the way that (at some periods at least) Jerome did. For example, near to the end of book 1 of *Contra Academicos* Augustine tells us that they took nearly seven days off to read and discuss Virgil. During that time they reviewed *(recensere)* the second, third, and fourth books of the *Aeneid* and discussed *(tractare)* them (the group had earlier discussed the first book of the *Aeneid*).[4] No justification is offered. All Augustine provides by way of explanation is a terse clause: *ut in tempore congruere uidebatur.*[5] Reading Virgil and discussing him simply seemed a suitable activity at the time. In this delightful insight Augustine casts himself (perhaps quite unconsciously?) in the role of a *grammaticus.* Along these same lines, Therese Fuhrer in her commentary *Augustin Contra Academicos* notes that in other classical sources, and indeed in Augustine's later writing, *tractare* functions as a technical term used to describe the action of commentating upon a text.[6] In the light of this, as well as of our earlier discussion of the practices and settings of ancient education, it appears that Augustine is filling a well-understood role. Detailed exegesis of classic texts was precisely what would be expected from such a teacher working on the border between grammatical and rhetorical education.

Augustine came to Cassiciacum having left a promising career. It is then, perhaps, to be expected that Augustine would wish to distance himself from this past. Cassiciacum would not be simply another rhetorical school. It is true that absent is any detailed account of the model exercises such as we observed listed by the rhetorician Ailios Theon (memorizing set texts, retelling of fables, composing narratives, etc.). And yet, would it be difficult to interpret Augustine's long invective against Cicero in *Contra Academicos* (3.16.35–

4. *c. Acad.* 1.5.15.

5. *c. Acad.* 2.4.10; CCL 29.23.

6. Therese Fuhrer, *Augustin Contra Academicos: Vel de Academicis Bücher 2 und 3* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1997), 139.

17.37) as a model declamation? The legal imagery is certainly present. So is its fictional setting. Harkening back to Plato's *Apology* and that earlier trial, here a Roman philosopher is tried for his words concerning the morals of the young *(de adulescentium moribus)*—but this time justly convicted.[7] Or should this scene be interpreted against the tradition of moral philosophy?[8] Surely both interpretations are possible. Such model declamations on moral-legal themes are common ground between rhetorical and philosophical modes of discourse.

Though we can find traces of rhetorical elements, Augustine's educational program at Cassiciacum looks much more like a school of philosophy than anything else. If we return to Monica's presence, while there are numerous examples of women philosophers, we have no record of women studying professional rhetoric.[9] Also, throughout Cassiciacum and particularly in the *Soliloquia* the dialogue form signals, in light of Hadot's analysis of ancient philosophy, Augustine's commitment to the principle of dialogue as a mode of enquiry. Other clues are more obvious. In terms of the content treated at Cassiciacum, in his refutation of the Academics Augustine displays an awareness of and exploits to his advantage the three traditional divisions of philosophy: physics, ethics, and logic.[10] By doing so he joins his work to the larger community of philosophi-

7. *c. Acad.* 3.16.35; CCL 29. 55.

8. As Therese Fuhrer does in her commentary *Augustin Contra Academicos: Vel de Academicis Bücher 2 und 3,* 395.

9. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity,* 282. Robert E. Winn has traced the significance of Monica's changing presence in the early dialogues with respect to Augustine's developing views of the relationship between reason and authority in his article "The Moral and Intellectual Failure of Divine Inspiration in Augustine's *De Ordine,*" in *Studia Patristica* 38 (2001): 342–47.

10. *c. Acad.* 3.10.23–3.13.29. The relation of Augustine's examples to the Stoic divisions of philosophy is noted by Peter King in his *Against the Academicians and The Teacher,* 72. Cicero refers to the Stoic divisions of philosophy at *Acad.* 1.10.36–11.42.

cal discourse. In terms of form, the theme of conversion announced at the opening of *De beata vita* runs throughout the early dialogues. Like Cicero, like Plotinus, Augustine is most concerned with the question of happiness. Of the three branches of traditional philosophy Augustine's Cassiciacum dialogues focus most upon ethics. Thus, when Augustine dedicates *Contra Academicos* to his patron Romanianus, what he promises of the work and of the education his young relative is receiving is not worldly success, but a taste of *real* freedom *(uerae libertatis).*[11] Discovery of the truth is important because it promises happiness.[12] Following from this, like other ancient philosophers Augustine utilizes the philosophical *exhortatio.* Looking back to Aristotle's *Protrepticus* and Cicero's *Hortensius,* Augustine drew upon a familiar tradition.[13] In addition to composing his own call to philosophy in the *De beata vita* Augustine had his pupils read the same work by Cicero that had ignited his love for philosophy so many years ago. In terms of manner, Augustine's Cassiciacum dialogues present a living model for education. As Hadot has argued, ancient philosophy did not only concern itself with theory. Schools also represented an alternative and superior way of life: practical and intellectual disciplines were cultivated with this aim in sight. Along this line Jean Diognon has well drawn our attention to the multiple ways that the Cassiciacum dialogues present a pedagogy in action: through the *Contra Academicos* Augustine draws attention to the process of the discovery of truth; in

11. *c. Acad.* 1.1.1; CCL 29.3.

12. As Karin Schlapbach points out in her commentary, the multiple attributions of *vera* in *Contra Academicos* signal Augustine's self-identification with the Platonic tradition: Augustine's school will lead students to knowledge of intelligible truth, not merely to opinion of sensible realities; see her *Augustin Contra Academicos: Vel de Academicis Buch 1* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2003), 35–37.

13. Aristotle's (now lost work) and Cicero's *Hortensius* were not, of course, the only such writings in antiquity. For a selection of other sources for this tradition and helpful bibliographical information, see Schlapbach, *Augustin Contra Academicos: Vel de Academicis Buch I,* 7.

the *De beata vita* we see unfolded the quest for the happy life; in the *De ordine* is uncovered the proper order of learning; through the *Soliloquia* we learn the right method for gaining knowledge of God and the soul.[14] Thus, in content, form, and manner of life, Augustine places his school in the tradition of philosophical education. Education is to serve the end of enlightenment.

Other elements of Augustine's program do not so easily fit within a classical framework. Negatively, there is no Greek. His students do read the *Hortensius* of Cicero. But Augustine's minimal exposure to classical philosophy, and the absence of Platonic dialogues from his curriculum, is stark. More positively, as his echo of Monica's prayer illustrates, Augustine's early thought bears the marks of Trinitarian theology: "O Trinity, support those that pray" *(fove precantes, trinitas).*[15] From 386 onward Augustine displays awareness of Nicene Trinitarian theology and of the need to avoid, for instance, Arian Christologies.[16] Further, as I argue in the next chapter, although invocation to gods is common enough in Plato, prayer becomes for Augustine a critical and innovative component to his philosophical method. Augustine's extended use of prayer within the *Soliloquia,* for instance, and the soul's interior dialogue with reason in the presence of God is certainly a Christian development of the classical tradition. Finally, recalling again Hadot's characterization of the place of dialectic within ancient philosophy, Augustine too gives reason free rein—well, almost. We will take up reason and authority later, so here I wish simply to note that the relationship between these two modes is complex and that, at the

14. Jean Diognon, "La 'praxis' de l'*admonitio* dans les Dialogues de Cassiciacum de saint Augustin," *Vetera Christianorum* 23 (1986) : 21–37, especially 35.

15. *b. vita* 4.35; CCL 29.85.

16. These lines are taken from the final stanza of Bishop Ambrose's hymn "Deus Creator Omnium." For background to Augustine's early Trinitarian thought, see TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian,* 116–23, and more recently, with bibliographical references, one might begin with Ayers's "The Cappadocians," in AE.

least, Augustine believes dialectical enquiry could never contradict the authority of Christ and the Bible (*c. Acad.* 3.20.43–44). Christ's divine nature writes a very large promissory note that Augustine does not expect will fail. No other philosophical school so closely identified its founder with the *logos* incarnate.

To sum up: we have found that, bearing traces of grammatical and rhetorical education, Augustine overwhelmingly identifies his program with the content, aims, and practices of philosophical schools, even while certain novel features are added to this model because of the suppositions of his new religion. If Augustine's school looked back to traditional modes, we look next at how he used this form to provide his own answer to the question of happiness.

Augustine and the Tradition of Eudaimonistic Ethics

According to Aristotle, ethics is that science concerned with "the goods that we can possess and achieve in action."[17] While some goods are sought for the sake of others (as wealth is for power and power is for honor, etc.), eventually there must be a good sought because of itself and for no other reason. In the ancient philosophical tradition that good universally desired is a condition of existence named *eudaimonia*: happiness is thus the properly human goal and philosophy the study of its achievement. The turn of science toward ethics was the lasting contribution of the Socratic movement;[18] for the next five hundred years philosophical schools throughout the Mediterranean—Academic, Peripatetic, Stoic, even Epicurean—

17. *Eth. Nic.* 1096B, trans. Terence Irwin, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 1999), 7.

18. This was the judgment of Cicero: "Socrates autem primus philosophiam devocavit e caelo et in urbibus collocavit et in domus etiam introduxit et coegit de vita et moribus rebusque bonis et malis quaerere" (*Tusc.* 5.4.10.) and reflects the consensus of the ancient world; cf. Arist. *Metaph.* 987B, *Diog. Laert.* 1.17–19, 2.45.

were unified in the goal they set out to achieve, being nothing other than the happy life.

Reading Augustine's *Confessions* and the lofty position he affords to Cicero's *Hortensius* in his movement toward conversion, one can easily forget that between the call to philosophy and his submission to Catholic baptism lay the distance of thirteen years of intense intellectual and religious activity: Augustine would make a feeble attempt at reading the Bible, join the Manichees, turn to skepticism, then to Neoplatonism, and finally to St. Paul before his baptism at the Easter vigil in 387. Reading the *Hortensius* did not in fact guarantee as direct an entry *ad philosophiae portam,* as it may first appear.[19] Along the way Augustine encountered numerous obstacles due both to the inadequacy of his own virtue, and the defects of the metaphysical positions that, while a Manichean initiate, he came provisionally to adopt during his twenties. Is the truth really knowable? If discovered, would the truth make us happy? Does God cause evil? What is the soul? These and other questions confronted Augustine while in the midst of his Manichean dualism. Under the duress of Augustine's search the edifice of Cicero's promise collapsed. It fell apart once Augustine came to recognize that neither the attainment of truth nor the stable enjoyment of happiness could be hoped for on the basis of any then known metaphysical position—concerning which Cicero's *Hortensius* had been silent and Mani's answer to the problem of evil had proved sinister.[20] Given the unfolding logic of Augustine's conversion, without

19. As may appear, that is, both from a cursory reading of the *Confessions* and by the fact that Augustine himself included the *Hortensius* as preliminary reading for his own students at Cassiciacum. (A method which evidently proved successful.) "Pauculis igitur diebus transactis posteaquam in agro uiuere coepimus, cumeos ad studia hortans atque animans ultra quam optaueram paratos et prorsus inhiantes uiderem, uolui temptare pro aetate quid possent, praesertim cum Hortensius liber Ciceronis iam eos ex magna parte conciliasse philosophiae uideretur"; *c. Acad.* 1.1.4 (CCL 29.5).

20. *conf.* 5.1425.

his encounter with Neoplatonic metaphysics and the Christian doctrine of Christ's mediation, Augustine's own educational quest initiated by the *Hortensius* would have failed.

Yet the influence of Cicero's eudaimonism remained. *Beatos nos esse volumus*:[21] around this psychological axiom Augustine explains the natural movement of men toward philosophy.[22] All desire happiness; wisdom is the condition necessary to the attainment of that end. You cannot exclude the virtue of wisdom from the concept of happiness because happiness is the by-product of virtue; it is immune from the vicissitudes of fortune.[23] Beatitude is more besides, but it is not less. The formal end may be clear enough but everything after that was swept up into the winds of controversy that swirled between the ancient schools. Does happiness reside in the body, in the mind, or in both?[24] Is happiness the life of virtue, the possession of pleasure, or some other thing? This confrontation between Christian and pagan accounts of the nature of the end of man is rendered artistically in a fifteenth-century edition of Augustine's *De civitate Dei* book 19, held at the Bibliothèque Municipale de Mâcon, and is instructive for our purposes.[25] The detail pictures

21. *b. vita* 2.10 (CCL 29.70, quoting Cicero's *Hort.* fr. 36).

22. This is echoed by Ragnar Holte, whose study may be consulted for further discussion on the question of happiness: "Comme dans l'écrit précédent, Augustin argumente dans le *De beata vita* à partir de l'axiome psychologique sur le désir de la béatitude" (196); *Béatitude et sagesse: Saint Augustin et le problème de la fin de l'homme dans la philosophie ancienne* (Paris: Études augustiniennnes, 1962); and stated with force by Hagendahl, "And what is more, it constitutes the key to his whole philosophy. To Augustine as to Cicero, the motive power that led him to philosophy was the wish for happiness" (490); see *Augustine and the Latin Classics* (Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1967). For a recent study, see Topping, *St. Augustine* (London: Continuum Press, 2010), 35–45.

23. *b. vita* 2.11; *mor.* 1.6.9.

24. *c. Acad.* 3.12.27.

25. (Ms. 2, fol. 193): Reproduced in Alexandre de Laborde, *Les manuscripts à peintures de la Cité de Dieu de Saint Augustin* (Planche, 1909) and printed on the inside cover of Ragnar Holte's *Béatitude et sagesse.*

a disputation in a medieval university lecture hall (roughly comparable to Oxford's Divinity School) between Augustine and four pagan philosophers: Epicurus, Zeno, Antiochus, and Varro. In the style of a Scholastic *disputatio* the miniature has Augustine elevated in the seat of the *magister* and clothed in his bishop's mitre and hat. These symbols portray what later Catholic tradition interpreted to be one of Augustine's chief contributions: the triumph of Christianity over the philosophers. The artist anticipates what the author tells: wisdom is now embodied on the earth in the teachings of Christ and the Scripture. True doctrine is safeguarded and communicated to the faithful through the authority of the bishop. As Augustine will boast in 390, Christianity accomplishes for the entire human race what philosophers attempted and failed to achieve for the very few.[26] In the detail each disputant has before him an open book and a rising banner announcing their relative claims. For Epicurus, the good of man is pleasure; for Zeno it is virtue; Antiochus announces his search for truth; Varro says the same; St. Augustine's reads *Justus ex fide vivit,* "The righteous live by faith."

If Socrates and Plato were alive, today they would be Christians: in these *Christianis temporibus* philosophy cannot remain unchanged.[27] At the opening of *De vera religione* (4.7) (A.D. 390) Augustine provokes his fellow philosophers with that challenge. What strikes Augustine in this his first exposition of a Christian philosophy of history, is the sharp contrast between the ineptness of philosophy beside the power of Christian revelation. Augustine reflects how even Socrates, for all his courage, was unable to challenge the polytheism of his day in any but veiled terms—as, for example, when he would swear by any dog or any stone that came immediately to hand.[28] Such stunts were living parables. It was not that Socrates believed dogs and stones the proper objects of rever-

26. *vera rel.* 4.6.
27. *vera rel.* 3.3; CCL 32.188.
28. *vera rel.* 2.2; CCL 32.187.

ence: rather, if natural creations directly fashioned by providence were unworthy of human worship, how much less were the stone works of man that stood dead in temples.

At the head of this tradition of Greek philosophy (and derivatively, of Latin) Socrates had said that knowledge is virtue and ignorance vice. At Cassiciacum there is little that amends this. Immediately after baptism, however, Augustine's turn to biblical exegesis and apologetics led him to consider more deeply the nature of evil and along with it the Church's teaching on sin. Thus, for instance, in Augustine's first anti-Manichean work he charged the Manichees with hastily seeking a cause for evil before knowing what it is. Augustine responds that evil is a perversion and not a substance. It is a movement of the will away from supreme existence that causes the disruption of God's pattern for creation.[29] Again, about this same time, in his first commentary on Genesis (also directed against the Manichees), Augustine produces another explanation of evil, this time linking it explicitly to pride. Interpreting the central position of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden, Augustine speculates: "Because if the soul . . . should turn to itself, abandon God, and will to enjoy its own power as if without God, it would swell with pride, which is the beginning of every sin."[30]

In this later account, sin is the will to enjoy one's own power independently from God. Ignorance alone will not account for the fragility of the human condition. Now *libido dominandi* is named as the *de*ficient cause of our unhappiness (cf. *lib. arb.* 1.4.10).[31] This insight is pregnant with educational implications. At this point I

29. *mor.* 2.1.1–2.9.18.

30. "quia si anima . . . ad seipsam deserto deo conversa fuerit et sua potentia tamquam sine deo frui voluerit, intumescet superbia, *quod est initium omnis peccati*" (*Gn. adv. man.* 2.9.12; CSEL 91.133).

31. See William Babcock, "Augustine's Interpretation of Romans (A.D. 394–396)," AugStud 10 (1979): 55–74, and James Patrick Burns, *The Development of Augustine's Doctrine of Operative Grace* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1980), 18–22.

wish to emphasize only how a vastly richer and, as Augustine believed, more realistic, description of anthropology opened up for him on account of his newly discovered Catholic faith, its Scriptures, and the methods of interpretation which he had learned from Ambrose.[32] Between 386 and 388 Augustine will at times speak as though happiness were the result of virtue—a calculable product achievable in this life. True as this may be, even prior to debate with the Pelagians, Augustine never considered happiness to be something attainable outside of the workings of grace. Only God can be happy by his own power: "For the nature of man did not receive the power of being happy on its own without God ruling it."[33] Increasingly, happiness as the goal of the moral life becomes subsumed into the more explicit aim of loving God.[34] We explore this theme in more detail in chapter 4 when we consider the role of reason in the ascent through the liberal arts. But, having drawn attention to some of the ways that Augustine was heir to and critical of the tradition of eudaimonistic ethics, let us turn directly to his dependence upon Cicero.

Cicero on Philosophical Education

Cicero's educational challenge failed to provide hope in the future attainment of the desired goal of happiness, and instead led Augustine into the hands of the Manichees, and then the skeptics. There are both psychological and doctrinal reasons for this. In or-

32. Cf. Carol Harrison, *Augustine: Christian Truth and Fractured Humanity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 48–53, and A. Mandouze, *Saint Augustin: L'aventure de la raison et de la grâce* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1968), 107–11 and, on the life and writing of Ambrose, Boniface Williams, O.P., *Ambrose* (London: Routledge, 1997).

33. "Non enim accepit hominis natura, ut per suam potestatem deo non regente beata sit" (*Gn. adv. Man.* 2.15.22; CSEL 91.144).

34. Cf. *Gn. adv. Man.* 2.27.41, and Oliver O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1980), 137–59.

der to appreciate the ways that Augustine departs from Cicero's vision of philosophical education in the framing of his own view of the end of man, we need first to say something of the debt that Augustine owed to his teacher.

Augustine, of course, acquired most of his knowledge of moral philosophy not directly from Greek sources but through Latin intermediaries, especially Cicero (106–43 B.C.). Hagendahl lists 264 passages that quote directly from Cicero's speeches, dialogues, and other literary materials, and counts 447 testimonies altogether.[35] Compared with 239 testimonies to Virgil, and 139 to Varro, this statistical predilection for quoting Cicero in fact corresponds to the relative degree to which his philosophical and rhetorical works shaped Augustine's early intellectual development.[36] From Cicero Augustine drew both the majority of his knowledge of past philosophical opinions and a pattern of literary composition.[37] The dialogue form that Augustine adopts at Cassiciacum is modeled after Cicero's own,[38] and in these early works he treats themes common to both the *Hortensius* and *Tusculan Disputations.* Most important for Augustine is Cicero's conception of the proper task of philoso-

35. Augustine's dependence upon Cicero has been the subject of a number of detailed studies. What Pierre Courcelle accomplished for our appreciation of Augustine's knowledge of Greek (above all in in his *Les lettres grecques en occident: De Macrobe à Cassiodore,* 2nd ed [Paris: E. de Boccard, 1948], especially 137–94), Maurice Testard and Hagendahl have done for his use of Latin sources; cf. Maurice Testard, *Saint Augustin et Cicéron* (Paris: Études Augustininnes, 1958) and Harald Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics,* 2 vols. (Goteborg: Elanders Boktryckeri Aktiebolag, 1967).

36. These figures are taken from the figures given in *Augustine and the Latin Classics,* for Cicero (570), Virgil (387), and Varro (628).

37. So Courcelle in his *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1950) comments that the Cassiciacum dialogues, "sont essentiellement cicéroniens, pour le fond comme pour la forme" (255).

38. As Jonathon G. F. Powell has written: "Cicero's explicit imitation of the Platonic dialogue was an innovation in Latin"; see *Cicero the Philosopher: Twelve Papers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 30.

phy. A reasonable picture of this can be taken from the two Ciceronian dialogues mentioned above.

From the *Hortensius* we find, above all, the call to wisdom. Borrowing from Aristotles's *Protrepticus,* Cicero himself came to regard the *Hortensius* as a suitable introduction to the study of his collection of philosophical dialogues.[39] Philosophy's task is to lead men back to a life according to nature, to correct bad habits, and to protect us from falling into error (frs. 64–66).[40] Philosophy teaches that true happiness flows from the contemplation of order and the beauty of the heavens, which in turn yields knowledge of the gods. And finally, if an afterlife should exist, philosophy informs us that it would consist in the contemplation of nature and of knowledge.[41] The view of the relationship between philosophy and happiness in the *Hortensius* is certainly open to criticism. At best Cicero's speculation offers a hypothetical model. He tells us what happiness *might* look like. Moreover, Cicero admits philosophy undermines its own claim to lead men to happiness by its inability to elicit consensus regarding the substantive nature of human happiness. On top of that Cicero's skepticism only added to the confusion. Whether there is an afterlife or whether man merely disintegrates at death, all he can recommend is that the pursuit of the truth is worthwhile—even if the truth should never be found (fr.106; cf. *Tusc.* 1.82).

Despite this disappointing conclusion, Cicero's dialogue left an enduring impression upon the young Augustine, perhaps in the way

39. At *Tusc.* 2.1.4 Cicero calls the *Hortensius* his answer to the "universae philosophiae vituperatoribus," the revilers of philosophy per se. Paul MacKendrick reviews the evidence for considering Aristotle's *Protrepticus* a source for the *Hortensius* in his *The Philosophical Books of Cicero* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1989), 112.

40. Fragments are found in *M. Tulli Ciceronis Hortensius,* edidit commentario instruxit Albertus Grilli (Milan: Instituto Editoriale Cisalpino, 1962).

41. Fr. 110: "Una igitur essemus beati cognitione naturae et scientia, qua sola etiam deorum est vita laudanda."

that wool receives its first dye. Immediately after arriving at Cassiciacum, Augustine reflects upon his earlier education. As he will in the *Confessions,* in 386 Augustine credits the *Hortensius* with his own turn to philosophy. He memorably writes: "From the age of 19, after I read in the school of rhetoric that book of Cicero's, which is called *Hortensius,* I was inflamed [*succensus sum*] by such a great love of philosophy."[42] Cicero's book enkindled the flame of desire in the young Augustine and directed his energy toward a definite, though unseen, object. As bishop, Augustine would come back to the lesson he learned from his first master and repeat it with approbation: philosophy required him to search for wisdom, not to search exclusively within this or that sect, "but wherever wisdom itself might be, so that I might love and seek and follow and hold and strongly embrace wisdom."[43] And that flame was not quenched through all the intellectual and religious adventuring of his twenties and early thirties: among Manichees, skeptics, and the *libri platonicorum,* although his reasons for believing would change, Augustine would never seriously doubt the practical and moral end for which wisdom is sought.[44]

At Cassiciacum Augustine also draws upon the *Tusculan Disputations.*[45] As Cicero tells us, his reason for writing the disputations is

42. "Ego ab usque undeuicesimo anno aetatis meae, postquam in schola rhetoris librum illum Ciceronis, qui Hortensius uocatur, accepi, tanto amore philosophiae succensus sum" (*b. vita,* 1.4; CCL 29.66).

43. "quod non illam aut illam sectam, sed ipsam quaecumque esset sapientiam ut diligerem et quaererem et assequerer et tenerem atque amplexarem fortiter" (*conf.* 3.4.8; CCL 27.30).

44. For discussions on Augustine's eudaimonism, see my comments in chapter 2, and Burnaby, *Amor Dei,* 255–300, O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine,* especially 137–59, and John Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptised* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 48–53.

45. For example, after his first direct reference to the liberal arts (*b. vita.* 2.8), Augustine relies upon the authority of Cicero in the *Tusculan Disputations* (in reference to *Tusc.* 3.8.18) to resolve a discussion about the psychological or moral

educational. In the first book Cicero announces his aim to cultivate within Latin readers dispositions that will enable them to discover true happiness (*Tusc.* 1.1). Indeed, the structure of these dialogues communicates this purpose. Organized not as an Aristotelian treatise, where the systematic presentation of the subject matter is foremost, Cicero's structure is determined by his pedagogical aim; over the course of the five books the student is led gradually from less to more difficult topics. In the *Tusculan Disputations* to study philosophy is to commend oneself to a course of self-improvement *over time*. The fruits of philosophy take time to mature because repetition and the continual application of the intellect and will are all required to secure virtuous habits. Substantively, Cicero offers a great deal of practical moral advice relating to the pursuit of happiness through virtue. Like a good moralist he tells us, for example, that the enterprise of moral education is laden with obstacles: bodily pleasure, wealth, and love of honor are all ready distractions that can dull the mind and poison friendships (*Tusc.* 4.70ff.)—all this without claiming knowledge of the perfect life.

While Cicero adopted much from earlier Platonic and Aristotelian traditions of moral philosophy, his epistemology is derived primarily from the Academy. Having adopted skepticism, Cicero's theory of knowledge prohibits him from offering a certain definition of the nature of happiness. While his understanding of the end of man certainly precludes Epicurus's, since happiness is not in pleasure, he can not tell us whether happiness is *attainable* through the life of virtue (as with Zeno), or whether its nearest approach lies merely

effects of education. (*b. vita.* 2.8). At *b. vita.* 4.30–31 Augustine draws upon Cicero's concept of *frugalitas* (which Cicero takes as an equivalent to the Greek *sophrosune,* and calls the spring of virtue "reliquas etiam uirtutes frugalitas continet"; cf. *Tusc.* 3.8.16) to combine Platonic and Stoic elements by fusing the notion of the soul's possession of the intelligible ideas with the injunction to modesty. Again, at *sol.*1.11.19 Augustine refers to *Tusc.* 4.24 in a discussion about the proper interpretation of desire.

in the *search* for happiness (as with Antiochus and the late Academy); nor can he provide a substantive doctrine of its content. Cicero knows, for instance, that knowledge of divinity is the best kind of knowledge we can attain. But whatever gains this might have won are lost through the concession that conclusions about divinity are inherently probabilistic. And, as for happiness in *this* life, that too is doubtful. For no one, not even the best of the ancient philosophers, has accomplished wisdom while he walked on earth.[46]

In short, what Augustine learned from Cicero was a method ordered to a formal end. As we shall see, throughout his early writings, Augustine's inability to find a substantive doctrine of the content of happiness in Cicero vitiated Augustine's own capacity to seek *and find* the truth. This weakness of Cicero's educational position, and the apathy and moral damage that it tends to produce in the young, energized Augustine's later critique of Academic skepticism and provided the immediate occasion for the production of his own highly original alternative account of a theory of knowledge and the communication of knowledge, divine and human, through signs.

The Failure of Cicero's Educational Exhortation

More than a decade intervened between Augustine's encounter with Cicero's call to philosophy and his baptism at Milan. Another forty-three years passed between his baptism and death in 430, during the Vandal siege of Hippo Regius. Since Augustine's reasons for drawing upon Cicero transformed drastically over time, statistical analysis alone could never tell the full story of Augustine's dependence upon him; and yet, it can point us to a pattern that plots Augustine's relation to Cicero's own philosophical ideas.

Augustine's literary relationship to Cicero may be divided into three phases. Throughout the Cassiciacum period Cicero's name

46. *Tusc.* 2.1.5; 3.68–69.

appears 33 times; from then until ordination in 391 Cicero's name is still invoked but with less frequency; this trend intensifies such that for a period of nearly twenty-two years (until about the time Augustine begins to work on his *De civitate Dei*) Cicero is hardly named;[47] in his final years, we find a reawakened interest in Cicero (and other profane authors, particularly Varro). By then, however, Augustine returns to his teacher for apologetic purposes, as a source of pagan opinions largely to be refuted. For instance, there is a well-known exchange with a young Dioscorus in this period (*ep.* 118, A.D. 410/411) who, as an eager student, took an excessive interest (at least in the bishop's view) in Cicero and other classical authors. To answer his questions Augustine takes care to cite Cicero. But he does this in order to illustrate the incompetence of pagan philosophers.[48] Again, in his debate against Julian, he refers extensively to his past master but does so to refute him and Julian on their own terms (*c. Jul.* 4.12.58–60, 4.14.72). However, of all his later writings, it is within *De civitate Dei* that Augustine's renewed interest is most evident. More than one-third of Augustine's total references to Cicero are found in this encyclopaedic book alone,[49] all of them for apologetic purposes. An example of this is found at book 4, chapter 30, where Cicero's authority is enlisted for a double purpose. In this context Cicero is portrayed as a clear-sighted Roman, whose rational judgment is able to see through his own peoples' superstitious belief in augury ("Cicero augur *inridet auguria*"). At the same time, Cicero's willingness to compromise what he knows to be the truth about augury—even up to accepting election to the position of *Augur* in B.C. 53!—makes such a worthy Roman ridiculous when compared with the nobility of even simple women ("*Cicero augur* inridet auguria"). Where the great Cicero capitulated to superstí-

47. Cf. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics,* 571–73.
48. *ep.* 118.25–27.
49. Cf. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics,* 572.

tion, simple Christians endured heroic martyrdom for their faith in Christ.[50]

All this illustrates how, compared to his later works, Augustine's early dependence upon Cicero for his articulation of his moral theology is great indeed. And yet even in his earliest period we can see the way that Cicero's vision for philosophic education failed to sustain. The *Hortensius*'s immediate effect upon Augustine was to turn his mind toward religion. Having grown up going to church under Monica's care, Cicero's exhortation, not unreasonably, turned him to the study of the Bible. But, as a clever young man already thoroughly versed in classical prose, Augustine found the Latin Scriptures distasteful and barbaric. Translated two generations earlier by missionaries to Roman North Africa, the version Augustine read was, to his ear, rudimentary when set beside the prosody of Cicero and Virgil.[51] Indeed, the Scriptures lacked more than good taste; they were also inconsistent. The morality of the Old Testament appeared not to harmonize with that of the New Testament. And, after noticing the discrepancies between the two genealogies in the gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, Augustine looked elsewhere.

Taking our lead from the *Confessions* we can recognize how Augustine later saw that these were not the actual reasons for his rejection of the Bible, and subsequently of the Catholic Church. Of the condition of his soul at that time he says:

50. "Cicero augur inridet auguria et inridet homines corui et corniculae vocibus vitae consilia moderantes. Sed iste Academicus, qui omnia esse contendit incerta, indignus est qui habeat ullam in his rebus auctoritatem"; *civ. Dei.* 4.30 (CCL 47.123). One partial, though significant, exception to this trend is Augustine's use of Cicero's principles of oratory, which he outlines in the fourth book of *De doctrina Christiana* (completed in 426).

51. On why Augustine's rhetorical education may have discouraged him from seeing the coherence of the Scriptures, see Raymond D. DiLorenzo's interesting comments in "Ciceronianism and Augustine's Conception of Philosophy," in AugStud 13 (1982): 171–76.

et non eram ego talis ut intrare in eam possem aut inclinare cervicem ad eius gressus… tumor enim meus refugiebat modus eius, et acies mea non penetrabat interiora eius (*conf.* 3.5.9).[52]

And I was not the sort of man to be capable to investigate the Bible, nor was I able to incline my neck to [make progress upon] its [steps]… for my inflated head [*tumor*] recoiled from its [humble] style, and my keen wit was not penetrating its interior sense.

He was unable to penetrate the hidden meaning of the Bible because he was too proud. *Because* he was proud? Does Augustine here succumb to a simple ad hominem? It may be, although for reasons we shall later explore, he himself thinks it important to incorporate psychological and moral considerations into a theory of knowledge. To disregard this as a pious afterthought, or to believe Augustine is merely confusing psychology with logic, is to overlook a potentially rich insight. Augustine has other reasons for thinking his former position false. What he has done here is to explain why it was nearly impossible for him to discover the correct opinion *given the state of his soul* at the time. As I argue below in chapters 4 and 5, in contrast to Ciceronian skepticism, Augustine will draw out the several ways that the mind must take into account authorities in its search for the truth about religion.

Augustine accounts for his past disbelief and also the disbelief of pagan philosophers, in part, by reference to the psychological underpinnings of human knowledge. A wisdom that does not reorder the soul cannot but fail the student. Cicero's educational philosophy did not break the pride of its disciples. Following Augustine, we can at least imagine how despair flowed naturally from his pride. Augustine's claim is that humility opens the soul to that which can fill it from the outside: recognizing a greater power than itself, the soul then has reason to hope that goods not yet attainable may be so one day. Contrarily, the proud man admits of no good outside

52. Cf. O'Donnell, *Augustine: Confessions,* 1.26, my translation.

of what is gained by his own power. When his own power fails, then rushes in despair. In this respect the *Hortensius* left Augustine as he had always been: weighed down by the chains of acquisitive habits. By his own account, as a young philosopher Augustine still sought the "things of this world." After falling in love with Ciceronian philosophy, in the following decade he devoted himself to the advancement of his career, to the escape from his Catholic mother, and eventually to the pursuit of a marriage for money. Ideas, like people, became distinct only against the horizon of his ambition. In short, liberated by the hope of wisdom, Cicero's abstract appeal to happiness did not in reality have the power to free Augustine to achieve his longed-for end.

Manichean Dualism

This incapacity led to other unfortunate consequences. Where Cicero's protreptic conducted him was not most immediately to the Church of his mother but into the fellowship of an esoteric religious philosophy whose origins lay in Persia. Augustine tells us that he never contemplated salvation outside of the name of Christ (*conf.* 3.4.8); rejecting key dogmas, the Manichees nevertheless hovered within the orbit established by the attractive force of orthodox Christianity.[53] What was enticing about the Manichees was their promise of a rational basis for belief. Because he eventually rejected that position, we can with some fruitfulness consider how Augustine's articulation of the function and limits of authority within the structure of Christian belief may be understood as a response to this early influence.

Augustine is certainly a credible interpreter of Manichean doc-

53. For a lively study of the influence of Manichean ideas on Western Medieval religious thought and practice, see Steven Runciman's *The Medieval Manichee: A Study of the Christian Dualist Heresy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1947).

trine,[54] but relevant for us is not so much Manicheanism itself as Augustine's view of the religion as can be inferred from his writings. We may summarize the relevant details briefly. Mani (216–277) considered himself the Paraclete, sent to purify the message of Christ; he disliked Old Testament morality;[55] he considered the New Testament corrupt through interpolation;[56] he thought incredulous the notion of an incarnate divine redeemer. Because the New Testament was tainted by a fabulous mythology, Catholic Christianity had grown corrupt and thus required the reform that Mani had been sent to deliver. Where the Catholic Church demanded trust in her authority, Mani promised an intelligible system of belief whose basis could be scientifically verified; where Catholic Christianity required faith with the promise of later understanding, Mani offered unmediated knowledge.[57] This invitation to set authority aside for knowledge was an offer the young Augustine could not refuse—though he would later devote a great deal of time untangling the reasons exactly why his mistake was not worth repeating.

Another way that Mani's influence helped to set the agenda for Augustine's own early moral theology was in his answer to the nature and origin of cosmic evil. Mani's scientific rationalism was enticing because it enabled Augustine the young philosopher to answer the problem of evil in a way that was both consistent and psychologically satisfying. Avoiding the thorny question of how an

54. Though there have been some challenges to Augustine's interpretation of Manichean doctrine, since the nineteenth century, Augustine's "reliability as a source for Manichaeism has been steadily reconfirmed." For a survey of scholarship on Augustine's reliability as a source for our understanding of Western Manichaeism, see John Kevin Coyle, "What Did Augustine Know about Manichaeism?" 43–56, in *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West* (Proceedings of the Fribourg-Utrecht International Symposiun of the International Association of Manichaean Studies), ed. Johannes van Oort, Otto Wermelinger, and Gregor Wurst (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 44.

55. *util. cred.* 3.7; *conf.* 3.7.12.

56. *util. cred.* 3.7.

57. *util. cred.* 1.2.

all-powerful good creator ruled a universe infected by evil, Mani conjectured a solution that would release both man and God from the dock. He simply posited a second deity, a dark god. Reducing metaphysics to material terms, he split Divinity into two opposing principles. Augustine for his part considered their view of evil a disaster. Although he wrote the bulk of his polemic against Manichaeism in his early years, one can find these same lines of critique in what is likely his last and what Augustine considered his favorite anti-Manichean writings, *Contra Secundinum Manicheum* (after A.D. 404).[58]

According to the system that Augustine abandoned, man lay at the center of a cosmic battle: poisoned by the bad particles of the one, Mani required deliverance through the good particles of the other. Says the *Manichean Psalm-Book*:

> When the Holy Spirit came he revealed to us the way of Truth and taught us that there were two Natures, that of Light and that of Darkness, separate one from the other from the Beginning.

And, in another psalm:

> I have known my soul and this body that lies upon it, that they are enemies to each other before the creations […] of divinity and the hostile power that are distinguished always. The body of death indeed and the soul are never in accord.[59]

A complex method of theurgy developed to accomplish this purgation. Fasts, prayers, and a strict regiment of abstinence aimed at

58. Cf. *retr.* 2.36. As one commentator has observed, the heart of Augustine's critique of Manichean dualism in this his last letter on the subject is the rejection of the idea that God—as the Supreme Good—could be subject to harm and thus changeable. On this, see Guilia Sfameni Gasparro's "Au coeur du dualisme Manichéen: La polémique Augustinienne contre la notion de 'Mutabilité' de dieu dans le *Contra Secundinum,*" 230–42, especially 239–40, in *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West,* ed. van Oort, Wermelinger, and Wurst.

59. Pss. ccxxiii and ccxlviii; cf. *A Manichean Psalm-Book: Part II,* ed. and trans. Charles R. C. Allberry (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1938).

limiting soul's connection to body.[60] Flesh, not will, held the origin of evil. The sum of this delivered the great benefit of freeing Augustine from personal responsibility for his own incontinence.[61] By imagining a pluralistic cosmos, however, it produced corresponding liabilities, which, for philosophical reasons well understood in the Platonic tradition, were unsatisfactory to the young philosopher.[62] Moreover, however internally consistent Manichean materialism may have been, it failed also in its promise to predict celestial movements. At the last it was the superior predictive power of Greek mathematical and empirically based models that forced Augustine to abandon hope in the Manichean claim to revealed truth. This in turn produced a temporary crisis of skepticism during which time Augustine lost confidence in reason itself.[63] But all of this was soon to change. Not long after his fall from Manicheaism he encountered the preaching of Ambrose, bishop of Milan.

Although not all the blame for Augustine's turn to skepticism,

60. For example, Psalm cclxviii reads: "I have not mingled with the intercourse of the flesh, for it is a thing that perishes. Thy good fight I have set myself to […] I strip myself of the body of destruction, the habitation of the powers of death…and ascend on high to thy Aeons from which I was once separated, that I may receive thy gifts, my merciful God, my Saviour, my Rescuer." See also Augustine's description of the life of the Hearers and the Elect (*ep.* 236) and the collection of Manichean texts with discussion listed in "Appendix I: The Life of the Manichaean Church," in Andrew Welburn's *Mani, the Angel and the Column of Glory: An Anthology of Manichaean Texts* (Edinburgh: Floris Books, 1998).

61. *conf.* 7.3.4.

62. Such as implying, for example, an infinite regress of causes. On Plato and Aristotle's articulation of the first cause, see William Keith Chambers Gunthrie's *A History of Greek Philosophy VI: Aristotle: An Encounter* (Cambridge: Cambridge Unviersity Press, 1993), 246–63. In his account of the One, Plotinus too is committed to the metaphysical priority of simplicity (e.g. at *enn.* 5.4.1; 5.6.3); on this see, Dominic J. O'Meara's *Plotinus: An Introduction to the Enneads* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 43–49, Wallis, *Neoplatonism,* 57–61, and Arthur Hilary Armstrong, *The Architecture of the Intelligible Universe in the Philosophy of Plotinus: An Analytical and Historical Study* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1967), 1–3.

63. *conf.* 5.3.6; 5.7.12, 5.14.25.

and then dualism can be heaped upon the weakness of Cicero's educational method, much can. Cicero's view of philosophical education encouraged the conditions for such a fall. Just as we can link the movement from Ciceronian skepticism to Manichean dualism within the narrative of Augustine's early biography, so also I think we find compelling textual and circumstantial reasons to suggest that these influences in turn shaped Augustine's own positive articulation of his early moral theology; what is more, understanding this intellectual background helps us to recognize the setting out of which Augustine articulated themes central to his own conception of education, of the human good, and of the method by which that good can be achieved in practice. I conclude by identifying three such themes.

The Setting of Augustine's Moral Theology

After what has amounted, admittedly, only to a survey of two of Augustine's early influences, I nevertheless wish to specify how understanding this setting can illuminate for us three themes central to his early moral and educational thought. The first theme concerns Augustine's treatment of the goal of human life, the second and third, his view of the subjective and objective conditions that make the attainment of that end achievable in practice.

The first theme is Augustine's adaptation of classical eudaimonistic ethics. Cicero's *Hortensius* enflamed Augustine with a love of wisdom, but provided no substantive doctrine of the happy life. As a consequence of this merely formal conception of the *summum bonum,* in the sequence of Augustine's biography Ciceronian skepticism allowed Augustine to pursue happiness all the while clinging to his earlier metaphysical materialism. When Augustine did encounter Mani's dualism and religious rationalism it presented itself under a plausible aspect, in part, because it left Augustine free to conceive happiness in the material terms he already knew (*conf.* 4.2.3). Focus-

ing on Augustine's Ciceronian background (though by no means to the exclusion of his Christian and Platonic sources), helps us interpret how Augustine came to view the *summum bonum* as the first term within his moral theory; this helps us also to understand why Augustine formulates within his early moral theology the detailed exploration of the *educational* conditions that make an authentic search into the question of happiness possible, in practice. The early Augustine, like Cicero and the classical philosophical tradition before him, took it for granted that happiness is that for the sake of which wisdom is to be sought. But more than this, Augustine's intellectual biography partially explains why he considers academic skepticism dangerous to the happy life. As I argue in the next chapter, the reason why Augustine's first dialogue at Cassiciacum is written *contra Academicos* is not because he is particularly worried about their bad epistemology—though he will refute that too—but, more precisely, because he knows by experience how corrosive skepticism is to education. This leads us to the further objective and subjective conditions which must be satisfied if happiness is to be achieved.

Along with offering no substantive account of the happy life, Cicero's educational philosophy offered little basis for hope in the successful outcome of its project. For Augustine this was like searching for treasure without knowing whether there was any to be found. Cicero had not warned Augustine of the proper sequence of knowing; that before knowledge must come trust, and before certainty, faith. When Augustine did come upon an impasse nothing which Cicero had taught him justified hope in a fuller revelation to come. Given the brevity of life, this lack of hope translated into a lack of will. In near despair, Augustine even came to wonder whether knowledge itself was not inimical to happiness—the sight of a laughing drunkard was enough to make that tragic conclusion plausible (*conf.* 6.6.10). To the other extreme, once he turned to Mani, what was promised was immediate access to knowledge.

In place of both of these alternatives Augustine offered the *media via* of a conception of authority that is rationally informed. Against both the despair of the skeptics and the overoptimism of the Manichees Augustine's teaching on religious pedagogy explores in great detail what authority is, what are its visible sources, and how these sources enable us to move toward God. (We look at these questions in chapters 4 and 5.)

But this subjective condition, the proper reliance upon authority, depends upon a further prior objective condition, which leads to the third setting and the final theme I wish to highlight within Augustine's early moral theology. Through his encounter with the Manichees Augustine was assured that he had no share in evil. This appealed deliciously to the young man's vanity. Augustine's opinion was predicated upon the metaphysical belief in a duality of cosmic principles, and upon the view that evil is an independent substance. Augustine's defense of the goodness of creation, and the anagogical potentialities of the curriculum of the liberal arts, proves how creation can serve positively as a ladder by which the soul might find its way back to God. Before and after 391 Augustine was an indefatigable critic of Manichean dualism. In his polemic Augustine emphasizes how every created thing is good; it is only our use of things that brings evil upon the world (as we saw in *De libero arbitrio*). Far from an intractable conflict, as Augustine learns both from Platonic and biblical sources, the battle between good and evil takes on an altogether different dramatic form. Evil is the absence of good. And, relating this to his views on the liberal arts curriculum, since creation is from the hand of God, it is also capable of leading us, however obliquely, back to creation's source. Study becomes a propaedeutic. As the ordered application of the mind to created (material and intellectual) objects, the liberal arts serve the end of natural theology insomuch as it is through the arts that the mind is trained to be capable to journey from perceptible phenomenon to the intel-

lectual cognition of the source of every phenomenon, the mind of God.[64] Augustine's reason for emphasizing this feature of the liberal arts curriculum is profitably seen in opposition to Mani's vision of a universe darkened by corrupt natures.

Conclusion

Understanding Augustine's intellectual biography alongside his educational practice provides one helpful point of entry into his early moral theology. Augustine's encounters with Ciceronian educational thought and Manichean religion are two settings that, in turn, provide insight into themes central to his ethics. Augustine's early moral theology is marked by the desire to uncover not only the *nature of happiness,* but also the *objective* and *subjective conditions* that make the achievement of that end possible in practice: against Cicero Augustine establishes the conditions which the search for happiness require; against Manichean dualism Augustine argues for the goodness of creation. Created by God, the order of creation (mirrored also in the order of the liberal arts) is a means by which the mind can grasp the first cause and be joined to it; against Manichean rationalism, Augustine argues for the necessity of authority in that quest for God. As we continue to explore Augustine's educational ideas, and how the purposes of the liberal arts are manifest in the epistemology, the curriculum, and the pedagogy undergirding the theory of the liberal arts, we will explore these themes in greater detail. We turn first to the problem of knowledge.

64. *mus.* 6.2.2, 6.4.7; *mag.* 11.38.

CHAPTER 3

The Perils of Skepticism

AUGUSTINE was aware of objections to the idea of educational progress, and nowhere more acutely than in his treatment of academic skepticism. Here the refutation of the New Academy[1]

1. The original (Old) Academy was founded by Plato in Athens in 385 B.C. and existed until the time of Arcesilas (d. ca. 241/40 B.C.). Up until that time the Academy considered knowledge possible, though only as grasped by intellectual cognition. Arcesilas cast this into doubt and is considered the founder of the Middle Academy. With Carneades (214/13–129/28 B.C.) the New Academy begins and with it a more systematic and dogmatic affirmation of the impossibility of even true intellectual perception. It is Carneades's form of skepticism that most directly influenced Cicero. For a discussion of the skeptical arguments of the New Academy, see Anthony Arthur Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy* (London: Duckworth, 1974), 75–106. It was an ancient commonplace that, when addressing philosophical positions, an author would more often debate the founder rather than living representatives of a school; on Cicero's use of this technique, see James S. Reid's comments in *M. Tulli Ciceronis Academica* (London: Macmillan, 1885), 24. Though armed with a detailed understanding of the historical development and evolution of the Academy (cf. 3.17.37–3.20.43), Augustine nowhere attempts to identify contemporary members of the school. I suggest that he does not bother to do this for two reasons: first, following established custom, his argument, if it succeeds, gains more merit if it can stand against an acknowledged founder of the school than it would by defeating a contemporary protagonist (for the same reason that an apologist for monotheism today achieves more by refuting Friederich Nietzsche than Richard Dawkins); second, since he believes Academic skepticism

emerged as the task of Augustine's first book at Cassiciacum, the *Contra Academicos*. The Academics required refutation because, if their skepticism proved true, then the theoretical basis for Augustine's emerging Christian curriculum, unveiled in the *De ordine* (386) and later revised in the *De doctrina Christiana* (395–427), would be shattered. *Contra Academicos* has been the subject of numerous modern studies, most seeking to establish the dialogue's relevance to contemporary epistemological concerns. Interpreting the dialogue as an attack on the logical foundations of skepticism, and thus primarily as a contribution to epistemology, has been called by David L. Mosher the "Received Interpretation."[2] Often overlooked, however, is the specifically moral significance of ancient skepticism and the prominent position that educational concerns have in shaping Augustine's treatment of his subject matter.

In this chapter I consider what Augustine understood the challenge of skepticism to be and how he thought it could be overcome. I argue that in the *Contra Academicos* Augustine does not take academic skepticism seriously as a philosophical position: Augustine's chief criticism against the Academicians is not their erroneous epistemological position—though he will provide a refutation of that—but rather the disastrous educational and moral implica-

is something that is "in the air" (cf. *Ep.* 1) his apologetic purposes can be served by showing how this ancient opinion is also instantiated in the words of the living persons that his dialogue purports to record.

2. According to Mosher, the received interpretation "asserts that Augustine's primary aim of the dialogue, insofar as he discusses Academic skepticism, is to refute the basic principles of Academic skepticism, viz., that nothing can be known and that one should therefore not assent to anything. In consequence, it is supposed that the dialogue is primarily a contribution to epistemology" (p. 89); see "The Argument of St. Augustine's *Contra Academicos,*" AugStud 29 (1981): 89–114. More recently, after his review of studies published on this dialogue, Augustine J. Curley has likewise concluded that "many, if not most, of the articles on Augustine's *Contra Academicos* concentrate on that part of the work that contains the logical critique of Academic skepticism"; see *Augustine's Critique of Skepticism: A Study of* Contra Academicos (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), 10.

tions that follow from it. Beyond helping to explain some of the novel structural features of this important educational dialogue (such as the two introductory dedications and the exhortations to prayer), this interpretation allows us to situate more securely its argument against Augustine's several early reflections on the value and limits of knowledge. The *Contra Academicos* thus serves as a window through which we discover the essential continuity of Augustine's philosophical thinking on liberal education and the way that skepticism undermines the conditions for learning. I argue for these claims by examining in turn Augustine's understanding of the academic position, the reasons why he considered skepticism to be merely a front for some deeper esoteric view, and finally, how we should interpret the details of Augustine's logical refutation of skepticism in the light of this educational emphasis. But before turning to these matters, it will be helpful first to outline the basic structure of the dialogue and the function of Augustine's several introductions and invocations to prayer.

Augustine's Invocations to Prayer

After a complex and highly rhetorical dedicatory letter to his patron on the necessity of providence and the utility of philosophy, Augustine and his friends gather to discuss whether the truth may be found. By a variety of formal elements *Contra Academicos* consciously imitates the style and echoes many of the themes within Cicero's own dialogues, most directly the *Academica*.[3] In particular, Augustine's use of the dialogue form suggests that he intends his work to serve a pedagogical end.[4] Not only does Augustine wish us

3. For Cicero's influence on Augustine, see Testard, *Saint Augustin et Cicéron,* 2 vols. (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1958), and Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics,* 2 vols. (Goteborg, Sweden: Elanders Boktryckeri Aktiebolag, 1967).

4. The dialogue was an established form of philosophical writing whose pedagogical intent was widely recognized, and explicitly referred to by Cicero in his *Tusculan Disputations* 4.6–7 and 5.28 where he says: "It is, however, the mark of

to learn about education; if we follow the movements of the drama, we ourselves have the opportunity to become educated.[5] (There may also be additional circumstantial reasons why Augustine chose the dialogue form.)[6]

---

an accurate reasoner to look, not at what each particular thinker says, but at what each one ought to say" (acute autem disputantis illud est non quid quisque dicat, sed quid cuique dicendum sit videre) (Loeb Classical Library 141 [Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1927], 18.454–55, trans. J. E. King). Interpreting dialogues this way is a method of which Augustine is aware and one that he himself applies to the reading of Cicero. Central to the argument of *Contra Academicos* is the contention that the Academics, and Cicero in particular, concealed their actual opinions through veiled writing; cf. *Contra Academicos,* 3.7.14.

5. The educational intent of *Contra Academicos* is most directly referred to by Augustine in his dedicatory letter to Romanianus, for whose sake Augustine has had the conversations transcribed; cf. *Contra Academicos* 1.1.4. Moreover, Augustine's pedagogical use of the dialogue form has much in common with Cicero's and Plato's use, but we should be mistaken not to notice some crucial differences. Most importantly, Augustine disagrees with Cicero that the truth needs to be veiled; this is one of his chief criticisms of pagan philosophy generally. Where Plato and Cicero's dialogues often do not arrive at a clear determination on a given subject, Augustine's do. Christianity demonstrates its superiority by the fact that it is capable of presenting the truth about happiness to all people, both the educated and the simple. The intent of Christian teachers, therefore, must be to present the truth outright. O'Meara commented well on this difference in his introduction to the dialogue, which likewise acknowledges the significance of pedagogical themes within *Contra Academicos*: "But now men—even in the mass—had become capable of receiving all spiritual doctrine because of the cleansing and elevation of mankind through the coming of the Saviour. It was time for the Academy to cease from its negative and skeptical teaching. This is the real point of Augustine's book"; see John J. O'Meara, *St. Augustine against the Academics,* Ancient Christian Writers Series, vol. 12 (Westminister, Md.: Newman Press, 1951), 17. For a discussion of the pedagogical nature of the Cassiciacum dialogues in general, see Laura Holt, "Wisdom's Teacher: Augustine at Cassiciacum," AugStud 29, no. 2 (1998): 47–61, and my further comments below.

6. Catherine Conybeare, e.g., in *The Irrational Augustine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), explores a number of interesting psychological and sociological reasons that may account for Augustine's choice of the dialogue form. However, since speculations concerning Augustine's *inner* intentions (i.e., as opposed to the more explicit intentions that can be inferred from the argument and action of the dialogue or from his letters or from the testimonials about him by

At the opening of the dialogue, having gathered together Licentius, Trygetius, Navigius, and Alypius, Augustine is pleased to find that all present concede the following: the quality of our apprehension of the truth directly bears on our success at achieving happiness. Two views then emerge as to whether we are happy in the attainment of truth or merely in its search. Moved by Licentius's suggestion, Navigius proposes: "Perhaps it is possible to live happily in this life while living in search of the truth."[7] Disagreement over this claim generates the ensuing action of the dialogue and remains the explicit topic of book 1. At the end of their first day, only one advance is gained. Albicerius, the mind-reader who buys prostitutes, serves as the counterexample that incites everyone to accept the need for a *discriminating* search for knowledge. Although Albicerius had superhuman powers of insight, this did not translate into true knowledge about happiness. What is the pedagogical import of this character? Evidently, that not all knowledge is helpful. We will explore in what senses Augustine thinks knowledge can be

---

others) rely upon circumstantial evidence about what lay behind the text they have a limited value. Specifically, Conybeare argues that Augustine writes the second dedicatory preface "to try to recover lost ground" that was given away when he failed to properly defer to his patron in the first preface. Are such speculations really necessary? I think, rather, that Augustine's own explanations for the dedications (that he wishes to encourage piety in his friend) are sufficient and more probable (*Contra Academicos* 1.1.4, 2.1.2). Conybeare's slip into the subjunctive mood when summarizing the results of her speculations as to the reasons, or better, the *motives* that led Augustine to choose the dialogue form is instructive. ("So Augustine's choice of the philosophical dialogue as his medium of expression at this stage of his life *may well have been* dictated by the tastes and preferences of his patrons," 26, emphasis mine.) Such speculations come up against their limit when, however, we find ourselves throwing guesses about how Augustine's words "unconsciously" (e.g., 18) reveal this or that about his state of mind. Even for one sympathetic to the standards and methods of modern psychotherapy, we are still not able to know enough about a dead man to justify conclusions about what his subconscious state was like while he was alive!

7. "Potest enim fortasse hoc ipsum esse beate vivere, in veritatis inquisitione vivere" (1.2.5; CCL 29.6).

harmful when we turn to his view of liberal education in the next chapter, but for now we note only this simple caution. Since happiness is the universal object of striving, wisdom must be related to the achievement of that goal. The wise man indeed must possess knowledge. But knowledge only "concerning those human and divine matters which pertain *to the happy life*."[8] Book 1 closes with Augustine's summary of the main moves of the day's verbal combat; he sets down a playful challenge before Licentius to prepare a defense for the skeptics, whom Augustine promises to prosecute.

Looking forward, Augustine's other dedicatory letter summarizes the arguments of the second and third books. In it Augustine urges Romanianus to take up philosophy, not to give up hope of finding the truth, and to pray. The particular obstacles that Romanianus needs to overcome are despair and false confidence. Both are errors of the will, both are disordered appetites that disqualify one from sharing in the philosophical life.[9]

What role do these dedications have within the overall structure of the dialogue? At the beginning of the first and second books Augustine addresses Romanianus personally and the first feature of these introductions to which I want to point is Augustine's exhortations to prayer (1.1.1; 2.1.1–2). Although little discussed, I wish to suggest that the necessity of prayer figures prominently within the moral argument of the dialogue. Indeed, recognizing prayer's centrality within the structure of the text, I believe, helps to open our view to the full breadth of Augustine's critique of skepticism.[10] Hav-

8. My emphasis: "sapientiam rerum humanarum diuinarumque scientiam dicamus, sed earum quae ad beatam uitam pertineant" (1.8.23; CCL 29.16).

9. *c. Acad.* 2.1.1; 2.2.3.

10. There is, of course, precedent for prayer as an essential component to philosophical method, most famously found in Plato's *Phaedrus* 257a–b and 279b–c. On the place of prayer within philosophical method Augustine is closer to St. Paul and St. Ambrose (and to Plato) than he is to Plotinus; cf. Philip Merlan's "Plotinus and Magic," *Isis* 138 (1953): 341–48, especially at 345.

ing exhorted Romanianus to pray, and having assured his friend of his own constant prayers, in the second dedicatory letter Augustine gives this indication as to why prayer is fundamental to philosophical education, and to the right method for seeking the truth about human ends:

> You will help me much while I am praying for you if you do not despair at our being able to be heard [*si non nos exaudiri posse desperes*], and if you also strain with us, not only with your prayers but also with your will and with that natural profundity of your mind.[11]

Pray and do not despair. Augustine tells Romanianus that prayer is his "first responsibility" (*prima tua causa est*).[12] Augustine's hope for Romanianus is that prayer will become the site of his struggle to form a pious will; that his friend will form the intention not to allow chance to blow him off his course. Only then will he become worthy of philosophical enquiry into divine matters. In the movement of the argument Augustine first identifies "what is commonly called chance" (*quae uulgo fortuna nominatur*) with "what is ruled by a secret order" *(occulto quodam ordine regitur),* the rule of providence.[13] Assuming a conception of free will that Augustine will only later defend in *De libero arbitrio* and later works, he next identifies prayer as the sacred chain. Prayer is the link that binds human freedom to the hidden order of the universe. Now that Romanianus has been afflicted with bad fortune—though this is really for his benefit—there remains nothing left to do for their friend but to pray *(nihil pro te nobis aliud quam vota restant).* Hence, it is by means of prayer that Augustine hopes Romanianus will share in the *occultus ordo,* the hidden order, of the universe. Through unifying their own

11. "Multum me autem adiuuabis pro te deprecantem, si non nos exaudiri posse desperes nitarisque nobiscum et tu, non solum uotis sed etiam uoluntate atque illa tua naturali mentis altitudine" (2.1.2; CCL 29.19).

12. *c. Acad.* 2.1.1; CCL 29.18.

13. *c. Acad.* 1.1.1; CCL 29.3.

wills to God's they can even hope "to come at last into the airs of true freedom" *(aliquando in auras uerae libertatis emergere).*[14]

We see Augustine mixing prayer with philosophy in a more thorough way over the next months in his *Soliloquies* and over the next years in the *Confessions.* In both works he adopts prayer as the mode of speech most adequate to philosophical introspection. Moreover, in the *Confessions* Augustine takes up in detail the relationship between skepticism and its attendant psychological condition, despair. In that retrospective telling of his association with the skeptics he never admits to having adopted their position; what he concedes is that "he began to think they *might* be right."[15] Augustine's reflections upon his early flirtation with skepticism, recounted in the fifth book of the *Confessions,* stress the psychological conditions that attended his temptations to systematic doubt. As E. Dubreucq has recently pointed out, the first element that Augustine draws attention to in his retelling of his temptation to skepticism in the *Confessions,* is his own experience of despair.[16]

In view of these calls to prayer within the *Contra Academicos,* but also with a glance forward to the *Confessions* and elsewhere, we can summarize the reasons why Augustine recommends prayer to Romanianus as a feature of philosophical method. Prayer both redirects the intelligence away from material goods as objects of aspiration and aids in the reintegration of the soul by a unifying act of the will. Prayer encourages two goods at once. First, as an aspect of philosophical method, prayer suggests to Romanianus the true

14. *c. Acad.* 1.1.1; CCL 29.3.

15. See O'Donnell's comments on *conf.* 5.10.19 in *Augustine's Confessions,* 1.314.

16. As Éric Dubreucq writes: "Le premier élément du "temps" sceptique, le désespoir, est clairement mis en avant: le livre V des *Confessions,* ainsi que le début du livre VI, présentment un grand nombre d'occurrences de ce terme et de ses dérivés." As evidence he then lists the following texts: *conf.* 5.7.12, 5.7.3, 5.10.18, 5.10.19, 5.13.23, 5.13.24, and 6.1.1. Cf. See "Augustin et le skepticisme académicien," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 86, no. 3 (1998): 335–65, at 341.

source of the happiness that he seeks. Being unseen, the source of happiness is presently hidden to his untrained intellectual eye.[17] Augustine hopes that through prayer Romanianus will be able to *anticipate* a level of understanding that philosophy can only later prove to him.[18] As we shall later explore, the notion of faith seeking understanding is a distinctive feature of Augustine's view of progress in learning. By praying the student moves toward the first principle of his knowledge by an initial act of faith.

Secondly, and equally important, prayer is also a unifying *activity*. As Augustine acknowledges, prayer requires an effort of the will. Such an effort demands that the student adopt a provisional, or at least assumed, certainty of vision that the intellect presently might not experience. Presupposing trust in divine providence, therefore, prayer exercises the human capacity to place one's confidence in God's existence and goodness before these realities have been demonstrated. Which is precisely the step of trust Augustine wants Romanianus to take. "Wake up, wake up, I ask you!" *(Euigila, euigila, oro te)*. And again: "Let us return to ourselves, Romanianus, that we might philosophise!" *(Sed ad nos redeamus, nos inquam, Romaniane, philosophemur)*.[19] The rhetoric in these prefaces leaps out at the reader, commanding, urging, pleading. As Augustine knows, potential trust in Providence increases only in the midst of actually trusting—much in the same way that we can only learn to hit a ball by actually swinging a bat.

17. At 2.1.2 Augustine tells Romanianus that he fears for him because his mind is "like a thunderbolt that is wrapped up in the clouds of domestic affairs" *(domesticarum nubibus quasi fulmen inuoluitur)* (2.1.2; CCL 29.19).

18. But philosophy, too, may be said to provide only a preparatory education. While Augustine clearly thinks philosophy can offer demonstrable knowledge about aspects of divinity, its capacity to illuminate is severely limited, and can only offer glimpses, as it were, "through clouds": "[Philosophia] uerissimum et secretissimum deum perspicue se demonstraturam promittit et iam iamque quasi per lucidas nubes ostentare dignatur" (1.1.3; CCL 29.5).

19. *c. Acad.* 1.1.3; CCL 29.4 and 2.3.8; CCL 29.22.

As an historical aside, although Augustine develops an argument for the educational value of prayer within the context of the Christian search for our first cause and final end, this approach has classical antecedents. Most pertinently, Aristotle had earlier emphasized the natural virtue of obedience in education. Obedience, that is, trust in an authority whose reasons are not at every moment completely understood, is the condition of most learning. In the acquisition of moderation, for instance, a student first learns by imitation. To learn temperance one normally must be habituated to it. A boy watches his father take only what is needed at dinner, sees his mother buy only what the household needs for the day or week, sees an older sister handle criticism without rage, and so on. If a child is to learn virtue it is first by habituation. Only much later will he have intellectual capacity to reason for himself why it was good not to eat dessert before dinner. Augustine and Aristotle both recognize that trust usually is required before understanding is gained. There is more to say on this but in the above text, at least, Augustine's imperatives suggest little of an intermediary state: Romanianus must either begin to act in faith, or remain in the position of unbelief.

In sum, consonant with Augustine's later analysis in the *Confessions,* Augustine's dedicatory letters and the calls to prayer within them suggest that Romanianus's incapacity to grasp truth is, most immediately, a failure not of the intellect but of the will.

Of course Romanianus must learn more than how to pray. Romanianus must learn how to reason properly, too. On the surface the dialogue serves as Augustine's invitation to consider the entire range of epistemological questions that dominated the discussion of those heady November days that *Contra Academicos* records.[20]

20. See Joanne McWilliam's article "Cassiciacum Dialogues" in AE, which provides a good overview of the debate over the historicity of the Cassiciacum dialogues, at 135–43. Ultimately, what we see is what Augustine presents for us to see. Thus—however historically accurate—the dialogue must be read as a literary piece, that is, as a work whose form and content contribute to the argument in-

Alongside prayer, Augustine also encourages Romanianus that he need not accept anything other than the most stringent proofs. He should believe a doctrine only where it has been demonstrated through a sure method. Augustine assures his friend that he will attain to knowledge with even more certainty than is his grasp of mathematical truths: "Believe me, or rather believe in Him who says 'seek and you shall find'—knowledge is not be despaired of, it will be clearer to you than are those numbers."[21] Promising such treasures, over the remaining two books Augustine attempts to make good on this claim—reconstructing what the skeptics believe, what effect such beliefs have on the young, and how skepticism can be defeated. We take each of these up in turn.

What the Academics Believed

Augustine explains the Academic position in three steps: first, man is not able to have knowledge about those things that pertain to philosophy *(quae ad philosophiam pertinent)*; second, nonetheless, man is able to be wise by seeking *(in conquisitione)* the truth; the third step and moral implication of the above is that the wise man will not assent to anything—since assenting to what is uncertain, and potentially false, is shameful *(nefas est).*[22] There is, in other words, both an epistemological and an ethical dimension to the skepticism of the New Academy.[23] As with every other ancient

tended by its author. The dialogues are well suited to an enquiring state by drawing the reader into the action and thus, to a degree, simulating the conditions which gave rise to the original insights as they dramatically unfold in the text (cf. Conybeare's discussion along these lines in *The Irrational Augustine,* 27–41).

21. "Sed item cauete ne uos in philosophia ueritatem aut non cognituros, aut nullo modo ita posse cognosci arbitremini. Nam mihi uel potius illi credite qui ait: *quaerite et inuenietis,* nec cognitionem desperandam esse, et manifestiorem futuram, quam sunt illi numeri" (2.3.9; CCL 29.23).

22. *c. Acad.* 2.5.11; CCL 29.24.

23. See Richard Popkin, *The History of Skepticism,* 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

school that survived into the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the Academics promoted a vision of the successful, happy, life. In the context of Late Antiquity, this helps explain why Christianity initially presented itself as a rival to the philosophical schools, and then later on, why pagan Neoplatonists saw Christianity as their chief opposition.[24] As the historian Pierre Hadot has well emphasized, the aims and methods of ancient philosophical schools were closer to a Benedictine monastery than to a contemporary British or North American university: ancient philosophical communities often shared a distinctive dress,[25] liturgical celebrations, and rigorous moral training.[26] To offer a metaphysical position without an accompanying explanation of how this translated into the ethical life was totally alien to ancient philosophizing after Socrates (and it remained so through into the early modern period). What the Academics proposed, for their part, was indifference. Indifference was deemed the appropriate moral response to the plurality of claims about the good life then on offer. What indifference offered, so

24. Of the many possible examples, one may think here of Martianus Capella's *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii.* Pagan in its form, it is intended as the basis for a universal education conceived apart from Christian revelation. Capella's work should be understood in the context of a broad and aggressive reassertion of pagan thought and religion throughout the Roman Empire at this time whose mounting energies reached a high pitch in the repaganizing reforms of Emperor Julian the Apostate (A.D. 331–363) and in Symmachus's bid to restore the Altar of Victory to the Senate House (A.D. 384). In his introduction to Martianus's work William Harris Stahl notes that "Martianus was himself such a gentleman, living in an age when the victory of Christianity over paganism was not yet complete. Longstanding rivalries between Christians and pagans, and the more recent successes of Christianity, had intensified the desire of pagans to undertake, as a social responsibility, the preservation of classical culture"; see Stahl, *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 1.5.

25. Augustine mentions this at 3.8.17.

26. On this point, see the work of Pierre Hadot and his *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault,* trans. Michael Chase (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1995); of particular interest are his third and fourth chapters on "Spiritual Exercises" and "Ancient Spiritual Exercises" and "Christian Philosophy."

these philosophers claimed, was the surest means to a life free from physical or emotional disturbance, which they identified with human flourishing. Writing in the second century after Christ, Sextus Empiricus claimed that the goal of systematic skepticism was not the establishment of epistemological certainty—which it would be for Descartes—but the cultivation of certain dispositions: "the Skeptic's goal is *ataraxia* [tranquility, peace of mind], and that as regards things that are unavoidable it is having moderate *pathe* [passion]."[27] What the skeptics wanted was peace. The moral and political goal of tranquility determined their views on the limits to knowledge. Indeed, the importance of offering a coherent moral position appeared so obvious to the ancient and Late Antique world that Augustine considered the Academy's skepticism to be a false front. Epistemology being of secondary value to ethics, Augustine concluded that skepticism must be the public face protecting a private doctrine: Plato's esoteric teaching about happiness.

In order to make explicit the educational implications of Augustine's critique of skepticism it will be useful to expand on Augustine's account of each of these three steps in the skeptic position. To the first step, Augustine cites Zeno on what would qualify as knowledge. Zeno claimed that for truth to be known an object must produce cognitive impressions that are so clear that they could not be mistaken for other than what they represent:

> Truth is a thing able to be perceived which would thus make an impression upon the mind from the object it comes from so that it would not be able to be [taken as though] it came from something else [*esse non posset ex eo unde non esset*].[28]

And again:

27. *The Skeptic Way: Outlines of Pyrrhonism,* trans. with introduction and commentary by Benson Mates (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 92.

28. *c. Acad.* 2.5.11; CCL 29.24.

We see, as Zeno says, namely, the sort of appearance which is able to be comprehended and perceived [*scilicet uisum comprehendi et percipi posse*]; this sort has nothing in common with false signs.[29]

Following Carneades, Cicero claimed that no true correspondence between objects and their representation exists in our ideas. And, admittedly, there is evidence to support this. There remains wide disagreement among philosophical traditions,[30] some examples of which Cicero cited in his own *Academica*:[31] there are the errors of sense perception (here Cicero repeats the textbook example of the oar that tricks the eye when it is submerged into water),[32] likewise, there are dreams, madness, fallacies, and sophistic arguments.

But an objection led the skeptics to posit the second step in their argument. If nothing can be rationally affirmed, some wondered, what binds us to justice over injustice? What could oblige us to seek the public good over private interest? Though we moderns are accustomed to living within what Frederick Vaughan has aptly called a tradition of political hedonism,[33] skeptic Romans were not. Rather more clearly than we do, the ancients saw the connection between skepticism and its political consequences. For: "the man who should approve nothing, would also do nothing" *(ut nihil ageret qui nihil adprobaret).*[34] Answering this charge Augustine reports how the Academicians introduced a clever distinction. While truth remains hidden, so the Academicians claimed, nevertheless, there is a type of plausibility that can be achieved by the wise man which is sufficient to justify action:

29. *c. Acad.* 3.9.18; CCL 29.45.

30. Augustine makes reference to the fact that Epicureans, Stoics, and Skeptics each have differing views of happiness; the first say it is pleasure, the second virtue, and the third identify happiness with the avoidance of error; cf. 3.7.15–3.8.17.

31. Cf. Cicero's *Acad.* 2.5.14, 2.18.57, 2.47.142.

32. Cf. *Acad.* 2.25.81–82, 2.7.19, 2.25.79.

33. On this point, see his classic study, *The Tradition of Political Hedonism: From Hobbes to J. S. Mill* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982).

34. *c. Acad.* 2.5.12; CCL 19.24 and cf. Cic. *Acad.* 2.34.110.

Here these introduced a certain kind of probability, which they began calling the truth-like [*ueri simile nominabant*]. They asserted that in no way did the wise man hang back from his duties so long as he had this other thing which he was following [*cum haberet quid sequeretur*].[35]

Guided in political and practical affairs by the rule of probability, the wise man will act according to the truth-like (*ueri simile*).[36] To Augustine's mind, however, this admission is merely verbal. On the one hand, it is difficult in logical terms to conceive how one could claim to know what is the truth-like in a given case without having a corresponding perception of the *uerum,* the true, to which one's notion is an approximation. After all, the only reason that at the end of the party you expect to find your coat that your hosts have thrown on their bed on top of all the others is because you retain a true impression in your imagination of what yours looks like. On the other hand, and more pertinently, though Cicero answers to the allegation of civic indifference, he continued to maintain that what is sufficient for duty is inadequate for assent. Clearly, there is a hidden premise, which should be numbered separately. The third and implied step is the moral claim that we do well *not* to multiply errors. Whatever his public deeds, it is the private reservation of opinion that remains the characteristic feature of the Academic wise man.[37] In other words, suspension of assent is the skeptic's great work. And by it the wise distinguish themselves from the foolish who do not know any better than to fall into error. Greater uncertainty is likely to lead to greater error; greater error to greater shame; therefore, better to withhold assent and avoid the occasion of error altogether. But how did the skeptic find out shame was bad?

35. *c. Acad.* 2.5.12; CCL 12.24–25. 36. Cicero, *Acad.* 2.43.110.
37. *c. Acad.* 2.5.12.

Why Augustine Did Not Take Skepticism Seriously

That Augustine considered the moral implications of skepticism to be the most significant feature of the New Academy is made more evident by the fact that, in one sense, Augustine did not take philosophical skepticism seriously at all: it is not particularly the epistemology of the skeptics but the moral and educational consequences of their position that draw Augustine's fire. Two aspects of Augustine's response, as well as his analysis of skepticism in several other early texts, support this interpretation.

First, as already noted, Augustine argues for the surprising conclusion that he does not believe the Academics themselves believed in skepticism. But, why then does he devote the last two books in the *Contra Academicos* to epistemological questions? I suggest that to answer this we need to remember that the dialogue too presents Augustine as having trouble convincing Romanianus and his own pupils of this very idea. Evidently, Augustine needed time to prepare his readers to accept the novel idea that skepticism was actually a front, meant to protect Plato's esoteric doctrine (cf. *ep*. 1.1). Though the interlocutors in the dialogue have various assessments of the Academics, they all (unlike Augustine) take the skeptic's arguments quite literally. I suggest, then, that Augustine devotes the last two books of the dialogue to epistemology so that he can win his students' trust. As M. Foley has argued, in order to convince his students of this surprising view, "Augustine must undermine confidence in their own opinions and build a consensus from which he can launch his own view." Given what we have already established about the dialogue, the acuity of this interpretation increases. Seen in this light, the opening debate between Licentius and Trygetius therefore "serves the function of establishing the importance of searching for truth and of making the two youths ea-

ger to persist."[38] Augustine, unlike most contemporary interpreters, could not take skepticism as seriously as Licentius, Trygetius, and Alypius because the skeptic position was simply incredible; in his view, not even the philosophers who originally put their name behind the position could have genuinely held it.

Secondly, as Augustine relates in his second dedication to Romanianus, there are two things that block one from knowledge: despair at finding the truth, and the presumption of having fully mastered it.[39] Both despair and presumption are states of psychological disorder. This suggests that disordered *psychology* and not some theory of knowledge is what is most likely to undermine a person's confidence in the truth. This conclusion is further corroborated by other of Augustine's texts. For example, in the *Confessions,* although their influence exercised a certain weight upon his mind prior to his discovery of the Platonists,[40] and during a particularly volatile period of his youth,[41] Augustine makes clear that he could not long be attracted to so negative a philosophy. The epistemological claims of the New Academy were simply too feeble: Augustine never entirely lost his doubt about doubting.[42]

This realization provokes again the question we began to answer above: If the skeptic position is that feeble, why bother with a refutation? Why did Augustine turn against the skeptics in his first Christian dialogue and reflection on education? We find a further clue in another text, Augustine's first epistle, written to Hermoge-

38. See his "Cicero, Augustine, and the Philosophical Roots of the Cassiciacum Dialogues," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 45 (1999): 51–77, at 64.

39. "Restant duo uitia et impedimenta inueniendae veritatis, a quibus tibi non multum timeo; timeo tamen, ne te contemnas atque inventurum esse desperes, aut certe, ne invenisse te credas" (*c. Acad.* 2.3.8; CCL 29.22).

40. Cf. *ret.* 1.1.1.

41. That was somewhere during 383 and 384; cf. *conf.* 5.10.19, 5.14.25 and *util. cred.* 8.20.

42. On this point, see John M. Quinn's excellent discussion in *A Companion to the* Confessions *of St. Augustine* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 274–77.

nianus about the same time as the *Contra Academicos.* In that letter Augustine offers a psychological explanation as to why skepticism is attractive for people alive in his day. As he claims, the strength of the skeptic's argument lies in its ability to deflate an opponent, in its capacity to subdue the young through rhetoric. In other historical periods the cultivation of a healthy skepticism was beneficial to the search for truth, but in Augustine's time this no longer was the case. As he writes, "in this age" *(hoc autem saeculo)* few intellectuals deserve the title of philosopher because most, being "careless of the liberal arts" *(incuria bonarum artium),* have lost their appetite for study.[43] What men needed now, so Augustine thought of his time, was not the humility to reexamine their opinions—as was needed when Cicero wrote—but the motive to search into any opinions whatsoever (*ep*. 1). Rather like today, Augustine's age lacked hope. In such a climate the skeptic conquers through a tactical insurgency; defeating his opponent's will for truth, he conquers before the fight begins.

Augustine elaborates on this theme in the *Contra Academicos.* After citing Zeno's definition of knowledge Augustine rebukes the Academicians for undermining youths' motive to learn. He writes:

> Did this definition move you, Platonist, so that among all men you would draw away the studious ones from the hope of learning [*ab spe discendi*]—so that they abandon the whole business of philosophizing, being helped along by their mental laziness?[44]

Once again, it is skepticism's moral and educational *consequences* that draw Augustine's fire. Of the many philosophical and religious errors that Augustine could have addressed in this his first Cassiciacum dialogue, skepticism requires refutation because it ruins the motive for seeking the truth. This insight remains valid in any age. Beyond eroding the foundations of a Christian theory of education,

43. *ep*. 1.2; CCL 31.4.
44. *c. Acad.* 3.9.18; CCL 29.45.

undermining the motive to learn destroys also the practical psychological precondition to the examination of any claims to truth, in science, in philosophy, in religion. If the wise man cannot claim any knowledge, then philosophy and reason have nothing to add to the quest for the happy life. Such an admission would be deadly to the human spirit.

To underscore the continuity of Augustine's thinking on this matter, in his *De quantitate animae,* Augustine similarly takes up the link between psychology and skepticism. In their search for a definition of knowledge in that dialogue, Augustine and Evodius begin by discussing what counts as a proper definition. Specifically, Augustine lays down this rule: to be valid, a definition must be true in its positive formulation *and* when the quantifier "every" is added to its converse.[45] Evodius agrees to this along with a set of other premises. They next turn to a definition of knowledge. After a brief discussion Evodius hastily consents to the following: there is no knowledge "unless something is perceived and known by firm reason" (*quant.* 26.49).[46] But, as Augustine explains, this definition is not true because it fails to satisfy the very conditions established only a moment earlier.[47] The dialogue presents Evodius making

45. In Augustine's example: "Man is a mortal animal" is true but "*Every* mortal animal is a man" is clearly not true; hence a narrower definition of "man" would be required (cf. *quant.* 25.47).

46. "Augustinus: Quid? hoc none concedes scientiam non esse nisi cum res aliqua firma ratione percepta et cognota est?/ Evodius: Concedo" (CSEL 89.194).

47. My point is not to evaluate Augustine's criticism of Evodius, nor do I wish, particularly, to defend Augustine's distinction between reason and reasoning (*quant.* 27.52); this would take us off our course by requiring us to establish the context and to reconstruct all the premises that were agreed to within the sequence of the discussion up to this point. For our purposes it is clear enough that Evodius's definition of knowledge is too broad: it does not sufficiently exclude the fact that animals can have perception without having reason (*quant.* 26.50). Augustine's main complaint is not with the definition but with Evodius's lack of care in formulating it.

other mistakes too, revising and reestablishing his opinions hastily, and repeatedly.

What is the philosophical point of following Evodius's blunders? Though Augustine's discussion of the definition of knowledge in *De quantitate animae* complements his theory of epistemology in the *Contra Academicos,* what I wish to highlight is the educational lesson that Augustine himself draws from this episode. In the movement of the dialogue, after Evodius's thoughtless concessions, what upsets Augustine is not so much Evodius's blundering logic, though he wants him to get that right too, as his *lack of attention.* In this more is at stake than a simple definition. Augustine warns Evodius that if he continues this way, continues failing to pay close attention and offering his assent without care, he may begin to doubt even those things "which were well conceded" *(quae bene conceduntur).*[48] This in turn leads to a discussion of the virtue of *constantia.* The conclusion Augustine draws is that the person who continually forgets and habitually fails to pay attention, predisposes himself or herself to skepticism. Evodius must learn *constantia* or else be in danger of becoming someone who is ever seeking but never finding.[49] While Augustine does not directly associate *inconstantia* with skepticism in *Contra Academicos,* these and other texts nevertheless do help us to identify a clear trajectory in his thinking, already present in his first dialogue, concerning the relationship between virtue and knowledge. Our final task will be to show how these insights into the educational intentions of *Contra Academicos* fit into the epistemological discussions that have usually been understood to be the focus of Augustine's argument.

48. *quant.* 26.51; CSEL 89.197.
49. Cf. *quant.* 26.51 and 31.63–64.

Education and the Perils of Skepticism

While the educational emphasis of the dialogue has often been overlooked, I do not thereby wish to deny the importance of epistemology in Augustine's critique. We do, however, need to examine Augustine's reasons for rejecting ancient skepticism with the awareness that he objects to their doctrine primarily *because of its educational effects.* While not every error is worth attending to, there are some we cannot afford to ignore. To Augustine's mind, at least, skepticism was such an error. There are two parts to Augustine's critique that we take up in turn.

In winning credibility with his students, the first part of Augustine's strategy is to demonstrate that skepticism is logically unsound. In this he attempts to undermine skepticism by drawing out its internal contradictions, displaying the humorous and absurd conclusions that skepticism leads to. Pedagogically, this is a sound method. It is imitable because this strategy automatically draws the feeble-willed reader (e.g., Romanianus) into the argument. Augustine uses only the premises already accepted by the skeptic. For example, recall that Zeno had said "an appearance can be apprehended if it appears in such a way that it couldn't appear as a falsehood."[50] Augustine agrees. He shares with Cicero the Stoics' strict definition of the requirements for a true cognitive impression, that is, the identical criterion of knowledge upon which the Academicians established their claim to skepticism. Should knowledge exist objects would have to make impressions so clear that they could not be mistaken for other than their original. But as Augustine points out, the very structure of this argument undermines the validity of its conclusion. Zeno's statement itself is both a definition and an example *of something that can be apprehended.* For skepticism to be

50. *c. Acad.* 3.9.21; CCL 29.46.

true, its own definition of knowledge must be false; to grasp Zeno's definition would be to falsify its validity. Skepticism is thus referentially self-refuting.

In this clever turn of phrase, of course, Augustine has already proven the formal inadequacy of the Academic's argument for skepticism. Nonetheless, in following the movement of the dialogue and by the reactions of his interlocutors, Augustine illustrates well how people very often cling to doctrines because of more (or less) than logical reasons. And these nonlogical reasons or *motives* are not always well understood, even by the one making their defense. Augustine takes seriously the psychological dispositions of his hearers (as he will continue to do throughout his career), and the delicate handling of the Cassiciacum discussions illustrates the importance of the psychological dimensions of belief. We see this illustrated, for example, in the shifting opinions of Alypius and Arcesilaus, who constantly adapt their argument. Suppose the skeptic replies, as Arcesilaus does, that he did not mean to formulate his position in quite this way, and that he is actually unsure whether Zeno's definition is true after all. Augustine accepts this. But his reply is pointed. Even if such modifications were allowed, one could still have knowledge. Zeno's definition would retain its position as one among two alternatives: namely, that it is either a true or a false definition. We, therefore, still know something. Or again, patiently engaging the skeptic, Augustine need not refute the definition itself to advance his own claim; he need merely point out that *if* it is true, then the one who recognizes this already knows some truth.[51] That is, in the very recognition of a logical contradiction Augustine provides the skeptic with an experience of discovery; without imposing alien principles Augustine has devised a model for offering the skeptic first-person experience of truth.

51. Cf. Curley, *Augustine's Critique of Scepticism,* 107.

Augustine wants the skeptic to see how his position is inconsistent in another sense too. Because of the uncertainty of cognitive perceptions the Academics had argued that the wise man should assent to nothing.[52] But that surely is a non sequitur. The practical application of the skeptical claim makes sense only for those willing to affirm yet a further positive statement, this time of moral knowledge: that error is shameful and to be avoided. To be consistent the skeptic would, once more, have to submit that claim also to Zeno's scrutiny, only to watch it crumble apart.

But if skepticism is self-contradictory, Augustine has yet to show how it might positively be overcome. He does this by offering three classes of knowledge as counterexamples. These each fall within the traditional Stoic divisions of philosophy: physics, ethics, and logic. And we observe that by providing examples in every branch of philosophy Augustine models a rather zealous immoderation. Logically, he need only give one instance of knowledge to discredit the New Academy. I suggest that Augustine's disproportionate response is a rhetorical strategy intended to overwhelm his opponent. Since, as I am arguing, Augustine believes the skeptic holds his position primarily on account of a psychological deficiency of the will, it makes sense why Augustine might appeal to rhetorical devises to convince his listeners. Successful teachers of teenagers grasp this point. Playful and sometimes excessive critique is one way to incite indignation, to reawaken a sleepy will. By shaking the skeptic Augustine engages in a type of Socratic pedagogy, shocking his interlocutor into sense[53] and thereby goading him into to reexamining his position.[54] In any case, Augustine shows that we

52. *c. Acad.* 3.10.22.

53. Cf. *Meno* 80a where Socrates's effect on his listener is likened to a stingray.

54. Crucial to the plausibility of this interpretation, of course, is the recognition of the three divisions of philosophy to which Augustine's examples correspond, something not always recognized by Augustine's interpreters, and is passed

know many things within each of the three branches of philosophy. First, in physics we can know about disjunctions as they apply to the world. We know that the world is either one or many; the world extends infinitely through space or it does not; it had a beginning or it did not.[55] Augustine treats mathematical relations as another species of knowledge that we can have about the world. He then takes up objections based on our experience of abnormal or subconscious states of cognition. Not even the possibility of psychic hallucinations can move him. For, whatever condition people may find themselves in, we still can assert with confidence that three times three is nine and that the square of rational numbers would remain as we recognize them now. Again, if our sense perceptions should prove inescapably deceptive, we would still be able to claim, with certainty, at least how they *appeared* to the senses.[56] Secondly, Augustine points to our knowledge in ethics. The summum bonum of human life, for example, is either nothing, or, if it does exist it is in the mind or body, or in both the mind and the body.[57] Lastly, in the third division Augustine points to our knowledge of correct logical inferences, such as, if *p* then *q,* and *p* therefore *q.* Augustine is not claiming, of course, that logic guarantees the truth of any particular conclusion, only that our recognition of the validity of syllogistic forms is itself an instance of knowledge.[58]

In defending Augustine's logical refutation of the skeptics I want to answer only a single objection, the claim that Augustine

---

over, for example, in Garreth B. Matthews's essay "Knowledge and Illumination," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine,* ed. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 172. The relation of Augustine's examples to the Stoic divisions of philosophy is noted by Peter King in his notes within his translation *Against the Academicians and The Teacher* (Indianapolis Ind.: Hackett, 1995), 72. Cicero refers to the Stoic divisions of philosophy at *Acad.* 1.10.36–11.42.

55. *c. Acad.* 3.10.23.
56. *c. Acad.* 3.11.25; 3.11.26.
57. *c. Acad.* 3.12.27.
58. *c. Acad.* 3.13.29.

attacked a straw man. Some have argued that, in Augustine's misunderstanding of the skeptic position, he failed to recognize the *class* of claims the skeptics made on behalf of their wise man. Along these lines, against Augustine's interpretation of Cicero's position Christopher Kirwan and Gerard O'Daly suggest that Academic wisdom is better conceived as a strategy for *negotiating life.* In other words, it does not commit the skeptic to any definite claim to knowledge.[59] As O'Daly accurately relates, Augustine did not believe someone happy who merely seeks his goal (i.e., the truth) never to find it. To this O'Daly replies:

> But [Augustine's] argument *presupposes* that happiness entails accomplishment of desired goals rather than the *conviction* that the pursuit of a worthwhile desire, even if unfulfilled, is satisfying. In fact, it is not clear that Augustine ever repudiates the premises that the unremitting search for truth *may* in itself be a worthy activity.

O'Daly concludes:

> For the Academic claim to stand, he merely, in Kirwan's words, "needs to know how a truth would seem if there were any," which he could do without having knowledge of the truth. Augustine's argument thus fails.[60]

In response to this objection, in the first place, O'Daly's criticism rests on an equivocation. He attempts to contrast two classes of claims that are of the same order: Augustine "presupposes" whereas the Academic only feels "conviction." In my view this distinction is not helpful. The problem is that the skeptic does hope we will take notice of his claims. If by "conviction" O'Daly (or the skeptic) means to signify something *less than* a statement about the world, then his argument is insignificant. We need not take interest

59. Cf. Gerard O'Daly, "The Response to Skepticism and the Mechanisms of Cognition" in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine,* 160 (emphasis mine).

60. O'Daly, "The Response to Skepticism," 161, citing Christopher Kirwan's *Augustine* (London: Routledge, 1989), 22.

and can set their doubts aside. But this is precisely what the skeptic does not want us to do. He tells us how we ought to behave if we would like to be wise. His "conviction" is cast outward into the realm of human action and public recommendation; for that reason it carries the same weight and bears the identical responsibility as does every other indicative declaration.

Additionally, O'Daly seems to overlook altogether Augustine's earlier argument in the *Contra Academicos* that established why he does not consider there being degrees of happiness. Although there plainly are types of activities and states of character that more or less closely resemble the happy life, Augustine is not concerned with these. In his view, anything less than complete happiness is, ultimately, failure. There is one object of happiness toward which human aspiration is properly directed. And this is God. For a rational creature to seek after something less than God is to render impossible the fulfillment of our highest aspiration; it is to become idolatrous, and thus to forfeit heaven. As it seems to me, all other things being equal, one who achieves his wish is plainly *happier* than another man who seeks but does not satisfy it. Constituent to the nature of human desire, as opposed to merely animal appetite, is that it is directed toward the achievement of rationally intelligible ends. We think about the ends we pursue, and sadness attends their frustration. To lack an end perceived as rationally desirable (as O'Daly must agree is the case with the skeptic wise man) is to lack some good. How the *lack* of a genuine good contributes to happiness, I cannot imagine.

That the skeptic holds his position by merely knowing the hypothetical conditions for truth is even less plausible. To claim to know what truth would have to be like (if it existed) is, after all, to claim to know *some* truth. In fact, it is to assert a series of truths. It is to claim at least: (1) that you have knowledge of the hypothetical conditions that would make knowledge of truth possible; (2) that no such con-

ditions pertain; and (3) that, therefore, the correct logical deduction from the first two claims leads to the conclusion that there is no truth. It appears, in short, that Augustine has understood correctly the skeptical position he confronted. By setting forth their doctrine the skeptics, like every other school, made assertions about reality. Augustine was right to address the Academic claims (insincere as he believed them to be) as though they were statements inviting rational examination.

We are now ready to face the *second part* of Augustine's critique, which centers directly upon the psychological and moral causes of skepticism. Having answered the formal epistemological claims of the New Academy, Augustine considers next the moral status of their position as a means of accounting for why such a flawed position would nevertheless be widely regarded.

In the *Hortensius* Cicero had claimed that although knowledge is impossible the wise man knows he is morally superior. For a person is in error "even if he gives his approval to a doubtful thing though it in fact be true."[61] The wise man is praised for his unwillingness to multiply error and for pursuing a cautious, principled reserve toward knowledge claims. His moral superiority is thus founded upon the refusal to pronounce on statements for which he himself has been unable to demonstrate. In reply, let us agree that caution can indeed be prudent. And, as Augustine points out, when other schools battle the skeptic remains a friend to all sides precisely *because* he appears to take no sides. For instance, watching the Stoics and Epicureans quarrel among themselves over the true definition of happiness, the Academic would rightly consider his position superior to both. Quoting Cicero, Augustine relates how the Academic would reason:

61. *c. Acad.* 3.14.32; CCL 29.54.

> The wise men of all the other schools (who appear to themselves to be wise) give second place to the Academic even while these same wise men would consider it necessary to claim first place for themselves. From this it can plausibly be inferred that the Academic [wise man] rightly judges himself to be in first place [*Ex quo posse probabiliter confici eum recte primum esse iudicio suo*], though according to the judgment of everyone else, he would be second.[62]

Augustine himself once envied this position. And, as in our own time, the pose of tolerance can bring advantages. In the presence of conflicting moral and political claims the tolerant person can seem like a generous outsider, uninterested and unaffected by lesser men's concerns. With ease the skeptic agrees to hear both sides. He need never render judgment. Safe in the ark of indifference, the tolerant skeptic does not believe that the sea of division will ever rise so high that he too must risk drowning in the storm of error. But of course there is no ark, and there is no such safety.

There are errors of omission too. One can be as mistaken to withhold judgment as another is to render it. In the passage above, Augustine suggests two ethical implications of skepticism of note. On the theoretical level, skepticism forces you to conceive moral opinions negatively. The skeptic can only deny what others propose, as it were, chastening but never quickening. As a philosophy, skepticism renders itself parasitic because it is incapable of genuine contributions of its own. Furthermore, on the practical level, having no reason to act contrary to natural self-interest, the skeptic is likely to follow that course of action incurring the least opposition. In other words, he is a conformist. Now a conformist need not always take on the shape of the dominant public opinion (although this will usually be the case). There is an interior type of conformism as well. I refer to the lack of self-mastery, the inner division caused by disorder within the passions. For some, threat of external punishment and reward will not

62. *c. Acad.* 3.7.15; CCL 29.43.

be sufficient to incite lawful conformity; for these the strength of appetite will prove irresistible. The threats of law will echo only faintly against the screaming promise of the sirens. Where their own desires bid them, they will follow. And why should they not?

To make us face the horrible consequences of this conclusion is the point of Augustine's legal digression, which rails against Cicero's betrayal of the young—but could equally be directed against much that passes for formal education today. As Augustine highlights, if skepticism should be accepted, we would lose the rational basis for condemning crime. The young have none but *extrinsic* reasons to bend their desires to the law's demands. As Dostoevsky, in his many explorations of the godless society explored through literature, Augustine's argument is that in such a society he would be courageous who suffered the consequence that satisfying desire would bring. In such a moral atmosphere deviance would take on a heroic dimension. As Augustine cries: "You Cicero, I am asking you! For what is at stake are the morals and the lives of the young [*de adulescentium moribus vitaque tractamus*], with whose education and instruction all your writings have been concerned!"[63] At last the educational consequences are laid bare: where skepticism thrives youths suffer. It would be impossible to convince a young man that "Do not commit adultery" is a moral truth because the best we could hope for is insight into the morally *plausible.*[64] But "plausibility" has no power to discipline lust. So, here too the skeptic adopts a conformism of a most insidious variety, conformism to the rule of his own untutored desires. In both the political sphere and in the interior kingdom of his mind, then, the skeptic binds himself to the determination of outside forces. He is a slave to the dominant opinions of his time; he is a slave to the passions of his mind. Seeking independence he is the least free of all.

63. *c. Acad.* 3.16.35; CCL 29.55.
64. *c. Acad.* 3.16.35.

Conclusion

In drawing attention to themes typically overlooked by those who see the dialogue primarily as a work of epistemology (such as the reason for Augustine's two dedications and his invocations to prayer) I have attempted to demonstrate the centrality of the moral and educational aspects of Augustine's critique of skepticism. I have argued, further, that recognizing its educational focus allows us to identify certain substantive and structural elements of the *Contra Academicos* that might otherwise be overlooked and, moreover, that these findings are consonant with Augustine's other early treatments of skepticism made, for example, in his *Epistula* 1 to Hermogenianus, in his *De quantitate animae,* and in his *Confessions.*

In the first instance, Augustine clearly considered skepticism to be inadequate on logical and epistemological grounds. This feature of the dialogue is well recognized, even though its conclusions do not everywhere draw agreement. In defense of Augustine's logical refutation and against some interpreters, I argued that Augustine correctly understood the relevant features of Ciceronian skepticism. Cicero's skepticism implies certain definite epistemological and moral claims that are (at least in principle) open to the types of logical refutation that Augustine provides. But more than this, I have shown how in Augustine's view the skeptic does not only neglect the contradictions in his own position; he also mistakes the true relation between *types of error.* In other words, he fails to apprehend the true order of moral value. He does not see that while some mistakes are of great consequence, others matter not at all, and that, though everyone who sins is in error, not everyone who is in error sins.[65] The skeptic fails to read the universe aright, and articulating Augustine's account of the *cause* of this blindness, that

65. "Certe enim non fortasse omnis, qui erat, peccat, omni stamen, qui peccat, aut errare conceditur aut aliquid eius" (3.16.35; CCL 29.55).

is, the weakness of the skeptic's will, is the most important educational finding of this chapter. In his attack against the skeptics he has claimed nothing less than that what you are capable to know depends partially upon the condition of your soul. Psychology matters.

This in turn helps to explain why prayer figures significantly within the structure of the dialogue. If, as I have attempted to demonstrate, the weight of Augustine's critique of skepticism falls only secondarily against the errors of epistemology and primarily against its corrosive moral and educational effects, then we can understand why prayer should hold more than a decorative position within Augustine's program for philosophical education. Beyond the use of the dialogue form, Augustine's two lengthy introductions and the invocations to prayer within them, serve, in a personal way, to incite Romanianus to engage his will: the call to prayer thus translates the substantive conclusions of the dialogue into a structural form that results in a literary work that is performative. The dialogue evokes what it represents. While it is only God who can grant us a stable vision of himself, prayer is one mode by which even the skeptic can work to unify himself with the God that he does not yet know. As in the *Confessions,* it is by joining our prayer to Augustine's that the reader—like Romanianus—can likewise experience partial reparation of his or her own will, here and now.

CHAPTER 4

The Liberal Arts Curriculum

WHAT DOES Augustine's curriculum tell us about the purpose of liberal education? A curriculum, whether this is constituted by texts, the study of concepts, or a sequence of activities, is necessarily finite. The boundaries we draw around a curriculum define how much time a student will devote to mathematics as compared to literature, physical exercise compared to music. Selection is inevitable. The criteria according to which that selection is made will be drawn from some conception of the *purpose of education,* that is, by a conception of why education is a praiseworthy activity. This is first in the logical order of the component parts of an educational philosophy: all other questions concerning curriculum, pedagogy, and learning outcomes, are derived from the answer to this one. Below I show how Augustine's treatment of the curriculum is determined by his view of happiness as the final purpose of education.

Augustine justifies his criterion of value on account of its appeal to the widest possible human interest. Happiness is the one good we cannot help but desire to achieve and it is at this point that Augustine's theory of education takes from his moral theology the primary purpose for action. Augustine's most striking claim regarding the curriculum is that the arts are capable of drawing the

student from the contemplation of material or created phenomena up to the eternal and unchanging cause. Of course, for this to happen the arts have to be studied in the right manner and with the proper intention. Some disciplines are more important than others; the significance of what can be learned in any one discipline is only seen in the light of the relation between the disciplines as a whole. In Augustine's view, much can go wrong in the structure of the curriculum. There is no automatic progression from the arts to happiness.[1] Here a more specific question arises: since the liberal arts, by themselves, seem to guarantee nothing more than an able intelligence, we need to explore whether, and if so, how, Augustine's treatment of the curriculum expresses his uniquely theological aims for education.[2] As we shall see, Augustine's presentation of the subject matter of the curriculum manifests his conception of the value of education (i.e., the purpose or purposes of education). In addition to his detailed discussion within the *De ordine,* at several texts Augustine makes clear that he desires the liberal curriculum to raise the student from the perception of material to immaterial things (e.g., *mus.* 6.2.2; *retr.* 1.3.1, 1.6.1, 1.11.1). Dialectic is the exemplary liberal discipline. He singles out this because of its capacity to draw students, most directly, to knowledge of God. To corroborate this interpretation of the value of education we will take in detail Au-

1. As a case in point: Augustine twice cites the great Varro—a polytheist—in the midst of his own discussions of the liberal arts and of order (*ord.* 2.12.35, 2.20.54). Danuta R. Shanzer, in "Augustine's Disciplines: *Silent diutius Musae Varronis*?" in AD, 69–112, argues that Augustine relied on Varro as a source for his own outline of the disciplines, at 74.

2. According to Shanzer, the first modern study to treat the question of the content of Varro's (lost) "*Disciplinarum Libri*" was Friedrich Ritschl's "De M. Terentii Varronis disciplinarum libris commentaries," in *Opuscula Philologica* 3 (Leipzig, 1877): 352–402. Ritschl's reconstruction of the contents of the disciplines was contested by Ilsetraut Hadot (1984) in her *Arts libéraux et philosophie dans la pensée antique: Contribution à l'histoire de l'éducation et la culture dans l'Antiquité,* and is defended, most convincingly, by Shanzer in "Augustine's Disciplines," at 78–88.

gustine's treatment of one of the arts, music. Before we turn to the structure of the curriculum, however, it is useful to observe the way that in the *De ordine* Augustine himself sets the study of the curriculum within the context of the search for happiness.

The *De ordine* on the Value of the Liberal Arts

The *De ordine* (A.D. 386) represents Augustine's first attempt to outline systematically a Christian account of the liberal arts. It is therefore natural to begin here our investigation of the value of secular studies. In the *De ordine,* the liberal arts are a means of the soul's reparation. The curriculum is valuable insofar as it helps to heal the soul, and sustain it in its journey toward God. To come to this, Augustine first establishes that God cares for humanity, and then shows how that care can be made manifest to us through the study of the arts.

In his opening to the dialogue Augustine promises to explain in what way *Deus humana curet.* He asks: How can we believe that God cares for man when all around us perversity and evil reign? With his Manichean friends in view, he presents the problem of evil thus: either divine providence *(divinam providentiam)* does not extend down into human affairs or all evils are committed by the will of God. Augustine dismisses the second opinion. As to the first, in principle he thinks it obvious that God's care extends to the earth, and so to human affairs. The complex unity of the flea, for instance, illustrates how far down God's hand is willing to reach. And yet not all recognize God's care. Many lack faith; many fail to apprehend the goodness of the order of creation. Augustine likens one who complains of God's design to the fool who thinks he can read a mosaic by focusing on a single tile. How bizarre we should think that critic who had so obviously failed to grasp the relation of the parts to the whole.[3] For, the only way to read a mosaic, of course, is to

3. *ord.* 1.1.2; *mus.* 6.11.30.

see each piece in its proper relation. Perceiving the action of God in creation demands a similar breadth of vision. Augustine elsewhere uses the analogy of the organization of the parts of the body to make the same point. The beauty of the human form, like the beauty of the universe, is only apprehended when seen as a whole: for, *universe* "derives its name from *unity*" *(universum autem ab unitate nomen accepit).*[4] To understand God's purposes written into the universe, then, we must learn to see how the individual parts of our experience relate to the whole of the created order. Augustine claims, likewise, that to understand the purpose of the curriculum of the arts one must learn to see how each discipline contributes to the soul's ascent to God.

Recovery of correct vision is a pedagogical task. Through the Cassiciacum dialogues we watch how this healing takes place in a community of learners.[5] Commentators have with good reason described the *De ordine* as an outline of the educational progress of Licentius and Trygetius. Indeed, all of the Cassiciacum dialogues can be read as a series of school exercises. As evidence for this pedagogical interpretation of *De ordine* we might consider how Augustine calls Cassiciacum *scholam nostram*; at another point he refers to the days' activities as the *adolescentium lucubrationibus,* as the "school-exercises for the boys."[6] By representing the education of

4. *Gn. adv. Man.* 1. 21.32; CSEL 91.100.

5. Michael Payne Steppat, *Die Schola von Cassiciacum: Augustins* "De Ordine," 82.

6. *ord.* 1.3.7; CCL 29.92, and *ord.* 1.3.6; CCL 29.91. On the pedagogical setting of the Cassicicacum dialogues, see Laura Holt's "Wisdom's Teacher: Augustine at Cassiciacum," AugStud 29, no. 2 (1998): 47–61. Also, as Philip Cary has well said: "Like Plato's Socratic dialogues (and interestingly, unlike Cicero's philosophical dialogues), the nature of teaching and learning is near the center of attention here, not only as a topic of conversation but as a matter for drama. The Cassiciacum dialogues do not just talk about the search for wisdom and truth; they dramatize it" (142); see "What Licentius Learned: A Narrative Reading of the Cassiciacum Dialogues," AugStud 29, no. 1 (1998): 141–63.

the youth through the medium of a dialogue Augustine invites his readers to become educated along with the two young men. Following the steps of the dialogue we too can be led to read the mosaic of creation aright. This interpretive lens helps us to understand why, so I suggest, although the central programmatic section of the second book describes the methods by which we learn to approach the investigation of the world, surprisingly, at the opening of *De ordine* Augustine tells us that the subject matter which must be understood first is not, indeed, the world, but ourselves. It is our lack of self-knowledge that clouds our vision. Only through recovery of self-knowledge can we hope to see the world aright. And this healing of the mind's eye, this strengthening of right judgment, is accomplished by nothing other than the medicine of the liberal studies *(liberalibus medicant disciplinis).*[7]

Education in the *De ordine* is a program of recovery made necessary by the fall of the human intelligence away from unity. Echoing a familiar Plotinian theme, Augustine argues that when lost in the objects of sense, the mind can no longer raise itself to grasp the unity underlying the cosmos.[8] Apparent irregularities, disasters, and injustices mar our capacity to recognize order. True education is thus a kind of soul therapy. In Augustine's view it would be imprecise to describe the arts, as some do today, as subjects pursued simply "for their own sake." To say this is simply not to say very much. The value of their pursuit is not dissociated from their relationship *to us.* To claim that education should be more pursued for more than economic reasons does not mean education is pursed without any reason; it is only to raise the question of what ends might extend beyond the horizon of power, money, and pleasure.

7. *ord.* 1.1.3; CCL 29.90.

8. *ord.* 1.1.2; and see Plot. *enn.* 4.8.8, 6.9.7; O'Meara, *Plotinus,* 100–110.

Happiness and the Structure of the Curriculum

At no time are the arts elevated beyond the dignity of preparatory studies. In the order of intellectual study, the arts are preparatory for philosophy, which is again preparatory for what Augustine calls instruction in the mysteries.[9] We have in Augustine an early outline of what will become the typical pattern of education in the schools between the twelfth and the seventeenth centuries: a structured sequence of learning moving from the liberal arts, to philosophy, to the sacred mysteries.

At five places Augustine lists the disciplines belonging to the liberal curriculum (*ord.* 2.12.35–47, 2.4.13–14; *quant.* 23.72; *retr.* 1.6; *conf.* 4.16.30), which include grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. In this sequence the student moves through linguistic (grammar, dialectic, rhetoric) to mathematical and scientific study (music, geometry, and astronomy), from grammatical to quantitative induction.[10] In Augustine's most important discussion (*ord.* 2.12.35–18.47) he imaginatively narrates how *ratio*[11] uncovers the structure of the curriculum. Moving

9. Augustine calls theology the study of mysteries whose objects are grasped through faith by one practiced at sound living: " admoneo te, quantum filius audeo quantumque permittis, *ut fidem istam tuam, quam uenerandis mysteriis percepisti,* firme cauteque custodias, deinde ut *in hac uita atque moribus constanter uigilanterque permaneas*" (emphasis mine); see *ord.* 2.17.46 (CCL 29.132).

10. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique,* 4th ed., 187–93.

11. At this juncture *ratio* seems to refer to human reason. Nevertheless, for the young Augustine *ratio* can refer to either human or divine reason. O'Meara, in "Saint Augustine's View of Authority and Reason in AD 386," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 18 (1951): 338–46, concludes: "Ratio in Augustine's early *Dialogues* stands for the discursive function of *mens* (i.e., *ratio* in the strictest sense), or for the completed act of the function (i.e., *intellectus*) or, by a natural transference, for the truths attained or attainable by such a function. That is to say, *ratio* is the process of the fullest human intellectual perception as Augustine conceived it, and is sometimes used also for the truths perceived" (344). Olivier du Roy, in *L'intelligence de la foi en la trinité selon Saint Augustin: Genèse de sa théologie trini-*

through each discipline *ratio* excavates the sequence of inductions proper to each subject that will enable the mind to ascend through the levels of rational organization immanent within creation. Each discipline is tersely described. At the end of this sequence (*ord.* 2.15.43) Augustine then turns back upon the whole to reflect on the significance of the arrangement of the disciplines. Having ploughed through the field of the disciplines, digging up, as it were, treasures unique to each one, he climbs up to survey what features unite them. Together the liberal disciplines prescribed in the *De ordine* (grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, music, geometry, astrology) (2.12.35–42) give access to the created universe. Through these arts we are able to grasp the rationality immanent within the world. As he writes: "In all these disciplines, therefore, all things [*omnia*] were being presented to reason as numerically proportioned."[12] "Omnia," it appears, is shorthand for literally "all things created."[13] If this is correct, then in Augustine's hand the liberal curriculum has become a microcosm of the order and rationality present within cre-

taire jusqu'en 391 (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1966), argues that Augustine's interpretation of *ratio* was strongly conditioned by his reading of Plotinus; against the background of Plotinus's theory of emanation, du Roy suggests that we might even see *ratio* as the Holy Spirit (cf. 126–48 and especially 132–34). Over against Philip Cary (see his *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 47–51), in his study of Augustine's early pneumatology Chad Gerber argues that Augustine does not in fact identify the soul with Christ. In *The Spirit of Augustine's Early Theology* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2012), Gerber draws attention to the way that, in the early dialogues, there are two reasons under discussion (human and divine) and that Augustine's precise meaning in any given text must be determined according to the context in which it stands.

12. *ord.* 2.15.43; CCL 29.130.

13. Interestingly, Augustine presents certain aspects of creation as though they were almost subrational; what is known through taste, touch, and smell, for instance, is less open to reasonable scrutiny (*ord.* 2.11.32) than what we perceive through sound or sight (2.14.39–15.42). At the same time, other features of creation are almost superrational; though dialectic gives some access to the nature of the soul, Augustine clearly thinks further training and discipline—as for example what philosophers pursue—is needed to understand the soul (*ord.* 2.15.43–16.44).

ation.[14] Like Genesis's creation account, Augustine's mythical narrative closes by interpreting the totality of what has been surveyed. Each branch of learning has its place. And in their combined subject matter the disciplines implicitly represent the entirety of the cosmos, thus linking the *ordo disciplinarum* to the *ordo* of creation.

The method of Augustine's presentation is significant too. As M. Foley has pointed out, in drawing the mind's eye back from individual arts to the complete course of the *ordo studendi*, Augustine's own life models the intellectual turn described at the opening of the dialogue.[15] Like reading a mosaic, the purpose of the disciplines is only discovered in the relation of the parts to their whole. In turning thus, *ratio* moves above the liberal arts to assume a vantage offered by philosophy. One purpose of the liberal arts is to help the student know what it means to know; to understand learning requires that one knows what it is that learns. This is not possible for everyone in every condition. In fact, the greatest cause of error in education is that man remains unknown to himself *(quod homo sibi ipse est incognitus).*[16] Thus, the liberal arts point to and find their immediate completion in philosophy, the subject whose task it is to understand the soul.[17]

In moving from individual disciplines to their structure Augustine shows us how the arts serve to prepare the student for philosophy and for self-knowledge. His ranking of the arts and his description of the relation between them is based upon his conception of the final purpose of education, which is happiness; each phase of the threefold educational movement from the liberal arts to phi-

14. See further Régis Jolivet's *Le problème du mal d'après Saint Augustin* (Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1936), 114–16.

15. On this, see Michael Foley, "The 'De Ordine' of St. Augustine," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston College, Boston, Mass., 1999, 146–47: UMI 9923402.

16. *ord.* 1.1.3; CCL 29.90.

17. *ord.* 2.18.47.

losophy to the sacred mysteries is ordered with a view to an achievement of our highest aim in God.

The Relation between the Disciplines

Beyond this general outline, how do the disciplines relate to one another in the *sequence* of study? In light of this structure (where the arts are ordered to philosophy, which is ordered to the mysteries) some arts rank above others. Individual disciplines are judged according to their capacity to prepare one for philosophy. One corollary is that, although the scope of the curriculum of the liberal arts is vast, Augustine can name the essential subjects to be learned relative to this educational purpose. Surprisingly all the arts can be reduced to one:

> And, lest anyone think that we have embraced something too broad, I say this plainly and with brevity. No one ought to aspire to knowledge of those [higher theological] matters without that—so to speak—twofold science: the science of good disputation [*bonae disputationis*] and the power of numbers [*numerorum*]. But if anyone thinks that this is too much, let him master number alone or only dialectic. But, if this is limitless, let him know perfectly what would be one in numbers.[18]

Augustine plucks out of the curriculum what is most useful in view of his pedagogical aims. If the course should prove burdensome, the study of six subjects can be reduced to two, or even one. He singles out dialectic and number because these most directly exercise the mind's capacity for synthesis. What Augustine anticipates is a strengthening habitual movement of the mind from sensible objects upward to intelligible realities. The study of number and logic are advantageous precisely because they provide the student with a model of reasoning which is independent of sense observation. This

18. "Et ne quisquam latissimum aliquid nos conplexos esse arbitretur, hoc dico planius atque breuius, ad istarum rerum cognitionem neminem adspirare debere sine illa quasi duplici scientia bonae disputationis potentiaeque numerorum. Si quis hoc plurimum putat, solos numeros optime nouerit aut solam dialecticam. Si et hoc infinitum est, tantum perfecte sciat, quid sit unum in numeris" (*ord.* 2.18.47; CCL 29.132–33).

is not to denigrate matter as such. It is rather to point to the necessity of being able to abstract from material phenomena universal features; to perceive the right order of creation the student must learn to discern the forms, that is, the unchanging aspects, underlying the visible creation. And as the mind strengthens its powers of abstraction it prepares itself for the next phase of study, philosophy.[19]

We may say that the arts are given in order, then, not of intrinsic importance, but in the correct sequence that they should be investigated. Although Augustine does not dwell on the ordering of the arts, some clues point to this conclusion. In his imaginative narration (*ord.* 2.12.35–18.47) *ratio* "discovers" the arts in what appears the natural sequence of the mind's coming to understand the world: natural in the order of *time,* not in the order of being. Grammar teaches rules of speech, logic its rational ordering, and rhetoric its presentation. Grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric come first, I think, because it appears (to Augustine) that knowledge about the world is initially mediated to us through linguistic symbols. Words are the first and common means through which objects are mediated to the mind—and precede our grasp of more abstract scientific and mathematical concepts and symbols. Within the *ordo disciplinarum,* after the linguistic disciplines come the empirical-mathematical sciences. Having completed its initial training in language, Augustine says that *ratio* (and the student) then turns to the search for knowledge through observation. What came to be known as the *quadrivium* focuses on the power of sense perception mixed with reasoning not solely through linguistic but also mathematical symbols. In other words, in the *quadrivium* the student turns to the quantitative study of nature. In the examination of material phenomena he learns that

19. At Cassiciacum philosophy itself has a strictly defined subject matter. Among the array of possible subjects associated with philosophy in the ancient world, Augustine reduces it, remarkably, to two: God and the soul (*ord.* 2.18.47; cf. *sol.* 1.2.7). Philosophy also understands number but in a way that is higher than can be understood through the liberal disciplines (*ord.* 2.18.47).

all reality bears the qualities of number, and so is capable of being counted, numbered, and weighed.[20] Consistent with the classical tradition, in the study of nature Augustine emphasizes the intelligible aspects that can be discerned within material phenomena. Empirical observation remains dependent upon the analysis that dialectic performs; it is the unchanging and mathematical features of music and astronomy that are emphasized, not their sensual qualities.[21] The student contemplates order in nature by means of the power of dialectic working through sense observation—so as to look upon a Beauty beyond sensual experience.

Hence, by an ordered sequence of contemplation, moving from linguistic to mathematical disciplines, Augustine promises his Christian students that with the right study of these subjects their minds will be capable to ascend to a vision of incorporeal realities whose cognition entails happiness. But how precisely does dialectic lead to beatitude? At this point we have sketched the reasons for Augustine's structure in abstract terms. Let us take up Augustine's treatment of two subjects in particular to make this claim concrete. We look at dialectic first because of its preeminence among the disciplines; after that we turn to his treatment of music.

Dialectic among the Disciplines

We bring three questions to our discussion of Augustine's understanding of dialectic: How does dialectic fit within the overall structure of the disciplines, how does Augustine define dialectic, and what does he think it can teach the student?

20. *ord.* 2.14.41; *mus.* 6.11.29. On this, see further du Roy's discussion of Augustine's use of Wisdom 11.21 in *L'intelligence de la foi en la trinité selon Saint Augustin: Genèse de sa théologie trinitaire jusqu'en 391,* 421.

21. *ord.* 2.14.41–43. As has been noted elsewhere, "Three of the four disciplines of the quadrivium can at least be said to begin with concrete phenomena, even though all [of] them succeed in leading to intelligible realities." Cf. Foley's discussion in "The 'De Ordine' of St. Augustine," 136.

Dialectic is to the other arts as the capstone is to an arch. It is the science that orders every other rational study insofar as it is the discipline through which the mind becomes conscious of its own rational capabilities.[22] Aristotle is said to have claimed Zeno of Elea (early fifth century) as the founder of this science.[23] Although the study of dialectic had an illustrious history prior to Augustine, and was highly developed even within several Platonic dialogues,[24] by the fourth century its character was less well defined. The concept of dialectic that Augustine inherited was a mixture of Platonic, Aristotelian, and Stoic elements, and practically, had a shifting position within the intellectual curricula of the day, moving between secondary school subject and philosophical discipline.[25]

Although no part of Augustine's early work contradicts the notion of dialectic as "the science through which we know knowing," a synthetic definition that covers all occurrences of the term is diffi-

22. *ord.* 2.13.38; *c. Acad.* 3.13.29.

23. *Diog. Laert.* 8.57. For commentary on Zeno's life and influence, see Geoffrey Steven Kirk, John Earle Raven, and Malcolm Schofield's *The Presocratic Philosophers,* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 263–69.

24. In light of *Meno* 75C, *Politicus* 534D, *Cratylus* 390C, *Sophist* 253, *Phaedrus* 265D–266C, and especially *Republic* 531D–535A, William Keith Chambers Guthrie comments on the relationship between dialectic and both mathematics and Socratic elenchus: "The final step in mathematical studies is to discover the common features of the various branches and work out their mutual relationships. In this way they will form the proper propaedeutic to dialectic, which aims directly at a knowledge of beauty and goodness, for so seen, they reveal the underlying harmony, proportion and order of the cosmos.... [Plato] does however say enough about its methods to show that it is the perfection of the familiar Socratic elenchus, whereby definitions, each an improvement on the last, are challenged and rejected until the right one is found, as with Justice in the present dialogue"; see his *A History of Greek Philosophy: Vol. 4. Plato the Man and His Dialogues: Earlier Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 524–25.

25. For a summary of some of the key developments in the concept of dialectic from Zeno to Cicero, see "dialectic," in *Oxford Classical Dictionary,* 3rd ed., ed. Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 461.

cult to produce, for the following reasons. To begin with, Augustine himself provides not one definition, but several. Beyond his discussion in *De ordine* where dialectic is placed within the *ordo disciplinarum* (which we looked at above), a few months earlier he had named dialectic the science of truth *(scientia ueritatis).*[26] (Does this collapse dialectic into philosophy?) At another place he refers to it indirectly as the *ars disputandi,* the method of question and answer.[27] Yet elsewhere he reiterates the claim that dialectic is a true discipline or body of knowledge, and that dialectic, unlike the other disciplines, is a discipline through its own nature *(per seipsam disciplina).*[28] Added to this, there is some debate as to whether Augustine's view of the nature and scope of dialectic changed. J. Pépin generated discussion by his claim in *Saint Augustin et la dialectique* (1976) that Augustine's view of dialectic had, indeed, shifted significantly throughout his career. Specifically, Pépin argued that when confronted by Julian's abuse of logic, Augustine became skeptical of the value of dialectic within theological controversy, and that these late tendencies can be discovered in texts such as *Contra Iulianum* (A.D. 421) and the *Opus imperfectum contra Iulianum* (A.D. 428–430).[29] More recently, J. Brachtendorf has argued that already by *De magistro* Augustine had begun to demote the place of dialectic.[30] To these we add S. Heßbrüggen-Walter's assertion that between *De ordine* and *De doctrina Christiana* Augustine develops "a completely new vision

26. *c. Acad.* 3.13.29; CCL 29.52. 27. *sol.* 2.7.14.

28. *sol.* 2.11.19; see Michele Malatesta's article "Dialectic" in AE, 269–70.

29. And yet, Augustine never rejects dialectic per se, only Julian's specious use of the discipline. Julian's two chief mistakes are that he uses dialectic in the service of his own vanity (*c. Jul.* 3.7.16 and 6.18.54), and that he misapplies principles of reasoning to justify specious conclusions (*c. Jul.* 6.19.60 and *c. Jul. imp.* 3.32). This view is well summarized by Malatesta in "dialectic" in AE, 270–71; and see Joseph Lienhard, "Augustine on Dialectic: Defender and Defensive," *Studia Patristica* 33 (1997): 162–66.

30. Johannes Brachtendorf, "The Decline of Dialectic in Augustine's Early Dialogues," *Studia Patristica* 37 (2001): 25–30.

of what the discipline can and cannot achieve, and of why it is worth the trouble to acquire some knowledge of it."[31] Both of the latter authors hold that Augustine began (within the *De ordine*) with what I shall call a substantive view of dialectic and that he eventually adopted, whether by the *De magistro* or the *De doctrina Christiana,* a much narrower concept of reason's scope. On their view dialectic is displaced by scriptural interpretation as the means for deriving normative metaphysical claims concerning God and the soul.

Aware of these potential hermeneutical obstacles, and confining ourselves to our own period, I nonetheless think we can derive a reasonably comprehensive statement of Augustine's view. Dialectic connotes a wider meaning than what we commonly attribute to logic.[32] As outlined in *De ordine,* and within the structure of the liberal arts, dialectic is much more than an intellectual tool. It is *the science of knowing*: the master discipline through which we self-reflectively gain knowledge about what it means to know.[33] We can draw out the significance of this definition by paying attention to the sorts of things that Augustine says dialectic can achieve and what it is capable of teaching the student.

Although dialectic connotes more than what we mean by logic, it is also includes the knowledge of basic rational operations, some of which Augustine makes reference to. Most generally, at the opening of his *De dialectica* Augustine calls dialect the science of good argumentation *(Dialectica est bene disputandi scientia).*[34] In

31. Cf. Stefan Heßbrüggen-Walter, "Augustine's Critique of Dialectic," in AD, 186.

32. See, e.g., the definition of logic given by Carl Cohen and Irving M. Copi in their standard introduction to logic, *Introduction to Logic,* 6th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1982): "Logic is the study of the methods and principles used to distinguish good (correct) from bad (incorrect) reasoning" (3).

33. *ord.* 2.13.38; *c. Acad.* 3.13.29; *dial.* 1.

34. *De dialectica,* trans. with introduction and notes by B. Darrell Jackson, ed. Jan Pinborg (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1975), 83.

the *Contra Academicos* Augustine makes the remarkable claim that, concerning dialectic, he knows "more than any other part of philosophy" *(plura quam de quauis parte philosophiae)*.[35] He claims, in particular, that dialectic has taught him three things: that true propositions may be derived from tautologies (e.g., the truth of the statement that if there is one sun then there is not two); the validity of various logical deductive forms (as in *modus ponens*: if *p* then *q*, *p* therefore *q*; and *disjunction-elimination*: *p*V*q*, *-p*, then *q*); and hermeneutical guidelines that define the charitable application of logical rules to arguments (such as the rule that disputes must be over more than merely verbal differences). Dialectic is sometimes even described as though it were equivalent to reason itself. For instance, it is through dialectic that reason becomes self-reflective, demonstrating what reason *is (quae sit)* what it *aims for (quae velit)* and what it is *capable to achieve (quae valeat)*.[36]

Understood in this light, the achievements of dialectic cannot be clearly separated from other achievements of reason even up to the contemplation of God himself. As one scholar has rightly remarked, the disciplines are not arbitrary exercises, "but means of expressing and attaining the truth from which they derive: God is unity, order, harmony, simplicity, the archetype and source of the truth which informs the disciplines, and to which they lead."[37] The arts are so many windows through which we can peer into eternity. And what is true generally of the disciplines here applies even more so to dialectic. Dialectic is therefore the paradigmatic discipline in as much as every discipline is a work of reason seeking to perceive the presence of unity within disparate phenomena. Each discipline extends *ratio*'s capacity to understand the mind of the creator as expressed through the work of creation. In short, within the struc-

35. *c. Acad.* 3.13.29; CCL 29.51.
36. *ord.* 2.13.38.
37. Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology,* 43.

ture of the arts, dialectic is the capstone; by it we know the place and relative significance of every other discipline; as the science of knowing dialectic teaches both the rules for sound argumentation and, in principle, whatever else reason is capable of discovering.

I conclude that Augustine emphasizes dialectic because of all the arts it most directly teaches the student how to grasp the order immanent within our experience of creation; by rising from effects to their causes we understand unity, draw nearer to God, and therefore to happiness—the final purpose of the curriculum. This same ambition is likewise evident in Augustine's treatment of music.

Music as a Vehicle to the Divine

What does Augustine think music is, and how does it help the student come to knowledge of God? Among the projected studies, the six books of the *De musica* offer further insight into Augustine's purposes for the curriculum. His treatment is notoriously difficult and, although widely studied in the Middle Ages,[38] has received relatively little attention compared to many of Augustine's other works. As I hope to show, in Augustine's curriculum music, like dialectic, contributes to the same final purpose of happiness. Before turning to Augustine's text directly, it will be helpful to situate *De musica*'s argument in the context of theories of music in education within the ancient world, and in relation to Plato's treatment specifically.

38. By an account of the wide variety of authorities who cite *De musica* directly from the fifth century on, as well as the number of manuscripts of the text dating from the eigthth century, there is ample evidence that Augustine's work was known and utilized by theorists and scholars. For a history of the text's reception and influence, see William G. Waite's *The Rhythm of Twelfth Century Polyphony: Its Theory and Practice* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1954), 35–37. For a listing of the location of the seventy-eight known manuscripts (some of which are abridged versions of *De musica*), see Jacobsson's comments in *De musica liber VI,* xxx–xxxix.

Music and gymnastic form the basis of early education in Plato's *Republic.* The correct musical formation of the young is necessary for both the health of the virtuous soul and the just city. "For never are the ways of music moved," Plato prophesized, "without the greatest political laws being moved."[39] At its best, musical education can harmonize the passions of the soul in accordance with reason and justice—enabling the soul to desire the good, and to experience justice as sweet. At its worst, music is the song of the sirens: intoxicating by its seductive charm, it can fling the young into that tangled wilderness which is untamed desire. Hence, according to Plato, when musical education goes wrong, justice is experienced as painful. The unmusical man forever experiences a conflict between his reason and his inclination; he cannot feel justice as anything other than a foreign element, morality and law as limiting impositions set against his freedom. For Plato too the unmusical man is "fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils."[40]

Two psychological principles underline Plato's discussion and likewise inform Augustine's treatment of the subject matter. First is the objective emotional content of musical forms. Plato, like many in the Greek tradition before and after him, believed that individual forms of music arouse distinct emotional responses; music is a medium of communication whose grammar is in principle universally understood.[41] Laying aside potential critiques for the moment, we can at least acknowledge the intuitive appeal that a version of the principle has. In modern as in ancient sensibility, it is not possible to raise an army with a sonata; nor do lovers typically pass their promises under a marching beat. Plato's second principle is that the human soul is imitative. The point of his long discussion in book 3 of the *Republic* wherein he classifies the parts of melody (into the

39. *Rep.* 424C; trans. Bloom.
40. William Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice,* 5.1.85.
41. *Rep.* 399A, *Leg.* 654E.

types of speech, harmonic modes, and rhythmic patterns) (398D) is to demonstrate how the parts of music together shape the dispositions and sentiment of the young.

In the Greek tradition Plato's view was not exceptional. In ancient music theory all ages, but particularly the young, learn first and naturally through imitating the people and objects they encounter.[42] In ancient Greek theory, modes and rhythms are charged with *ethos.* Music is pedagogically determinative because it effectively communicates patterns of human emotion: it imitates and evokes a range of feelings through the combinations of melody and rhythm produced by the poet; the imitative soul, for its part, responds by shaping itself around the images placed before it.[43] Summing up the Greek tradition of musical theory on this topic, M. L. West writes that as early as Aristotle's time it had become a commonplace that music was charged with *ethos.* Modes and rhythms could educate the emotions of listeners because they imitated the voices and movements of people marked by particular psychic states: "Music and dance therefore encode ethical qualities already manifested in human conduct and feed them back into the souls of performers and audiences."[44]

Returning to Augustine's curriculum, our glance at the Greek tradition of musical theory enables us to draw out two features assumed but not argued for in Augustine's own account. Augustine accepts both the imitative nature of the soul and music's power to encourage distinct patterns of emotional response. Augustine echoes Plato on this in passing, for instance, when he argues that recognizable universal patterns of response to music are grounded,

42. On this, see Martin Litchfield West, *Ancient Greek Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 246–53.

43. On Aristotle's understanding of the educative power of music, see Carnes Lord, *Education and Culture in the Political Thought of Aristotle* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982), especially 82–85.

44. West, *Ancient Greek Music,* 248.

in the first instance, in our common physiology.[45] Further, in *De musica* it is precisely because Augustine assumes music's capacity to shape the imitative soul that he finds it necessary to defend the place of the rational scrutiny of our aural perceptions. The ear hears ratios in sound and is pleased; but consonant with our dignity, the mind should always be called upon to render a judgment on that experience. Feeling includes thought.[46]

From here Augustine both builds upon and extends Plato's discussion. In *De musica* Augustine is interested in music not particularly for its emotional value but in its capacity to lead the soul to God by means of an intellectual ascent. Augustine had intended to write twelve books altogether, but only ever completed six.[47] Books 1–5 pertain to rhythm. These should be read—as he tells us—as a prelude to the explicitly theological discussion of book 6, which is where we focus our remaining exegesis.

At the opening of book 6 Augustine names the profile of his audience, with what intention he writes, and by what means music can help this particular type of reader to draw near to God. First of all, he is clear that not everyone should study music as a liberal discipline. Those who have already received Christian purity can fly

45. *mus.* 6.2.3. This conclusion is justified, as I take it, by Augustine's admission that some types of *numeri,* "numbers" or "rhythms," are embedded within our body even before the soul remembers or judges any particular fragment of sound: "I could not easily say that the sense is without such rhythms [*numeris talibus*] [i.e., 'sounding rhythms' (*sonantes numeri*), *mus.* 6.4.7] in itself even before something makes a noise. For otherwise it would not be delighted by their elegance or offended by their dissonance" (Non facile dixerim carere sensum numeris talibus in se constitutis, etiam antequam aliquid sonet. Non enim aliter aut mulceretur eorum concinnitate aut absurditate offenderetur) (*mus.* 6. 2.3; Jacobsson, 10–12). Augustine will later have much to say on the power of music to move us, even against our will, in liturgical contexts; cf. *conf.* 10.33.49–50 and O'Donnell's comments in *Augustine: Confessions,* 3.218–19.

46. *mus.* 6.11.24.

47. Books 6–12 would have been devoted to melody, cf. *ep.* 101.

with the highest love to the one and true God.[48] Augustine writes for the intelligent weak: all those dedicated to secular literature but without any idea of what they enjoy *(delectio)* in them.[49] So, desire does come back into it. Like the Greeks, Augustine too discusses music as a means to teach us about what we truly desire and why. This is the reason why Christians whose hearts are already given to flight in love for their homeland do not need the arts: he suggests that whatever benefit they can add is superfluous to the more immediate task of loving God. (In this, once again, Augustine emphasizes the subordinate position of the arts to religion.)

Secondly, in view of understanding the purposes of education, what Augustine thinks music theory can do is to lead the mind from contemplation of the corporeal to the incorporeal *(ut a corporeis ad incorporea transeamus)*.[50] Such an ascent is possible because the cosmos, in Augustine's view, is a riddle waiting to be solved. Most basic to this conviction is the premise that creation carries within itself vestiges or signs that point to divine realities. Augustine's teaching on the relationship between things and signs knew a complex development, which we shall not be able to trace here. We simply note how in another work at this time Augustine defined a *signum* as "something which is itself sensed and which shows [*ostendit*] to the mind something beyond the sign itself."[51] A sign is capable to teach. There is nothing unfamiliar about this. As St. Paul wrote to the Christians at Rome, the material universe holds within itself traces of the divine whose "eternal power and nature have been un-

48. *mus*. 6.1.1; Jacobsson, 8.

49. "His enim haec scripta sunt, qui litteris saecularibus dediti magnis inplicantur erroribus et bona ingenia in nugis conterunt, nescientes, quid ibi delectet" (*mus.* 1.1.1; Jacobsson, 8).

50. *mus.* 6.8.22; cf. *retr.* 1.4.1, 1.11.1.

51. Cf. *De dialectica* (A.D. 386) (5.7.7–8): "Signum est quod et se ipsum sensui et praetor se aliquid animo ostendit" (ed. Jackson and Pinborg, 86). This is a theme likewise developed in both *De magistro* and at *De doctrina Christiana*, 2.2.1.

derstood and seen through the things God has made" (Rom. 1:20). Going further than St. Paul, however, Augustine opines the divine traces should be understood in terms of a *hierarchy of numbers.* Like ancient theorists before him, Augustine interprets music as expressing numerical ratios.[52]

Music is not merely sound. In Augustine's view, our experience of music is actually the occurrence of a complex set of phenomena. Augustine analyzes the sound that is transmitted to our ear, the capacity of our senses to hear, as well as our mind's power to remember, produce, and judge music, in terms of what he calls *numeri,* numbers, or what is sometimes translated as "rhythms."[53] Hearing music, as we discover, is the consequence of five distinct *numeri* coming together: sound itself is a combination of pitch, duration, and volume, which together embody a rational form which Augustine calls a *numerus.*[54] But beyond this there must be a correspondence between sound and our sense. This physiological capacity to perceive is accounted for by the presence of what he calls sounding numbers *(sonantes numeri).*[55] Just as there must be an adequation between ear and sound, so also for the production of music there must be some capacity in the soul for musical creation *(operari numeri* or *occursores numeri).*[56] And since the sequence of sonic impulses can be divided infinitely, memory too is required to put these individual sounds together *(numeri memoriae* or *recordabiles numeri).*[57] Finally, reason's

52. See Roger Scruton's discussion of modern attempts to rehabilitate the Pythagorean and Augustinian theory that harmonic relations are relations of numbers, in *The Aesthetics of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 63–64 and 241–47.

53. See Jacobsson's discussion of this with references to other literature, *Aurelius Augustinus, De musica liber VI,* 7.

54. *mus.* 6.2.2.

55. *mus.* 6.4.7, 6.6.16. What he elsewhere calls the "rhythm of sense itself" (*ipsius sensus numerum*) (*mus.* 6.2.3; Jacobsson, 12).

56. *mus.* 6.4.5, 6.6.16.

57. *mus.* 6.3.4, 6.6.16.

capacity to judge the beauty of sound, and the relative achievement or failure of equality that any music portrays, is characterized as yet another type of number *(iudiciales)*.[58]

By understanding these various types of "numbers" *(numeri)* that govern music, the mind moves beyond merely sensual experience of numbers, and is led upward, to a consideration of the conditions that make music possible. What are these conditions? At the very least they include the creation of an objective order of numbers; they include also God's creation of the subjective order of human psychology, ably suited to interpret the rationality of sound in our perception, recollection, production, and judgment of music. By recognizing these twin conditions, on Augustine's view, the study of number and of the sound they embody can become for us the rungs of a spiritual ladder, leading the mind to ever rising levels of ontology. The dance through "types of numbers" has three basic movements. They are: first, through the *sensual observation* of music; next, to a *consideration* of the unchanging numbers whose proportions sound in motion embodies; finally, to the *contemplation* of their cause—that is, to a contemplation of God who is the cause of number.[59] In short, the movement from sensible numbers (in sound) to intelligible numbers (which describe the formal cause of sound) to God (as primary cause of both sense and number) is the way by which the student of the liberal arts *moves through creation to the divine*. It is in the ascent from motion to the unmoved that the mind is raised to the contemplation of divinity and brought

58. *mus.* 6.6.16, 6.4.5. The most prominent of these *numeri* are the *iudiciales*. According to Augustine, whenever we make judgments we do so according to some type of natural law (*naturali iure*) (*mus.* 6.4.5). This law, in turn, is established by the divine *numeri*. We know God better as we become connatural to him: when the soul turns away from bodily senses toward God it "is reformed by the divine rhythms of wisdom" (*diuinis Sapientiae numeris reformatur*) (*mus.* 6.4.7; Jacobsson, 24).

59. *mus.* 6.2.2–6.2.3.

unto the threshold of its beatitude. And all of this is interpreted against the Neoplatonic exegesis of Genesis 1:26 where the Bible records man's primordial fall away from God. It is the descent into plurality and distraction that makes a returning pattern of ascent necessary and urgent. For this reason Augustine thinks man is able to be partially restored to the original vision of unity through music—as the other liberal arts—that he enjoyed before Adam's sin.

Conclusion

In Augustine's description of the curriculum as a means for the renewal of intellectual perception, in his view of the relation between the disciplines, and in his claim of the mediatory capacities of dialectic and music, Augustine's treatment of the liberal arts curriculum manifests his understanding of *happiness* as the final purpose for education. Since every other human achievement is measured against this standard of success, in our analysis, we may name happiness as the final purpose of liberal education. The next chapter explores how Augustine's other purposes are present in his writings on pedagogy. As we shall see, through Augustine's discussions of teaching and learning, but also of faith and reason, the role of grace, and Christology, we uncover secondary aims that indirectly promote the achievement of happiness.

CHAPTER 5

Pedagogy and Liberal Learning

THE FINAL PURPOSE of education for Augustine is happiness in God. What further purposes for education can we discern through his discussions on pedagogy? In his early writings Augustine devotes no single text to pedagogy, even though numerous passages contain explicit and implicit references to his theory of teaching and learning, and especially to the importance of authority in education. At one point, for example, Augustine goes so far as to call authority the "medicine of the soul" (*medicina animae*) (*vera rel.* 24.45). This chapter aims to vindicate the concept of authority as a central component within Augustine's early pedagogical thought. I argue that even from his earliest works, Augustine had a developed notion of the place of authority within Christian education; and more importantly, from here we can see how the centrality of authority reveals further purposes for education not evident in the curriculum alone. Through our exploration of the role of authority in Augustine's pedagogy two further ends, the development of virtue, and enculturation into a Christian community, come to light as the immediate and proximate purposes for liberal education.

What is important to see is that *ratio* and *auctoritas* are not

opposing alternatives in Augustine's pedagogy. Even if sometimes contrasted, these are, rather, two modes through which the mind comes to grasp truth as a movement from faith to understanding. Pedagogy overcomes the asymmetry between the student's present and anticipated knowledge, skills, and dispositions: it provides a method for how desired outcomes are reached *through time*. Without an account of pedagogy we should never know how the ends of education could be actualized within the student. How do we become better? Can we define the processes by which the mind improves its intellectual and moral capacities? As Gilson remarked, the closest Augustine comes to addressing the modern question of the relationship between natural and supernatural orders of knowledge is not, as we are accustomed to, through reflection on the interaction of "faith and reason," but through the concepts of reason and authority.[1]

For Augustine reason is always operative throughout the learning process, present even when that process is awakened and sustained by the help of God and other agents. But this emphasis on the rational character of faith does not mean Augustine maintained what has elsewhere been termed an "intellectualist" view of salvation (a term I will discuss more fully below). Rather, Augustine believes students need to draw upon more than their own resources. Students must develop moral and intellectual virtues that will support their progress in education. They need to exercise trust in a variety of authorities.

1. See his prescient comments at the beginning of *Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine,* trans. Lawrence E. M. Lynch (London: Victor Gollancz, 1961), 33: "To seek a solution for the modern problem of the relations between faith and reason in the Augustinian explanation of faith's connection with understanding is to expose oneself to grave misconceptions. . . . Whether reason can or cannot attain certain truths without the help of faith is a question Augustine would certainly answer in the affirmative, and his purely philosophical refutation of scepticism would be enough to prove it. But Augustine does not frame the question in these terms."

Though human flourishing is a more basic end, virtue is the first aim of Augustine's teaching. The goal of virtue is first, that is, in time. We might call the acquisition of virtue the *immediate* purpose of Augustine's liberal education. But more than virtue, by the argument and action of his early dialogues, Augustine demonstrates his desire to draw students into a distinct type of intellectual community. Though Christ is an inner teacher, the dialogue between truth and the soul is quickened and often initiated while it is pursued among friends. This acculturation, since it is less immediate and more comprehensive than the acquisition of any one particular virtue, we shall name Augustine's *proximate* purpose for education. So, in mounting a case for the existence of these secondary purposes for education I begin by vindicating the place of authority in Augustine's early texts. Admittedly, some key texts suggest the very opposite conclusion, which we turn to first.

Pedagogy and the Role of Authority

At Cassiciacum Augustine does not begin by emphasizing the authority of the teacher. The first lesson his students need to learn even appears to undermine their dependence upon others: students are to learn to think for themselves. In the *De ordine,* in particular, Augustine stresses why the student should and by what methods the student can learn to form independent judgments. As he will later model with the education of his own son (cf. *mag.* 8.23), in the *De ordine* Augustine will at some moments point to the corrosive effect that authority can have on learning. For instance, dependence upon authority can disqualify you from joining in the journey of a liberal arts education; it can even block your path to happiness. Thus, he wonders aloud:

> As to those who are content to follow authority alone and who apply themselves constantly to good morals and right living, who either disregard or are incapable of being instructed by the liberal and noblest

studies—I do not know how I could call them happy so long as they live among men.[2]

Since reliance upon authority can jeopardize the intellectual independence of the student Augustine is adamant that his pupils should learn to reason for themselves as far as they are capable. To this end he continues:

I do not want the boys to believe anything whatever from me, except insofar as I am teaching and giving a reason [*nisi docenti rationemque reddenti*].[3]

Viewed in isolation these statements could be read without difficulty alongside Kant's great educational manifesto, "What Is Enlightenment?"*(Was ist Aufklärung?).* Some commentators have even supposed, I believe wrongly, that these texts justify the view that independent thought entirely replaces the need for authority. Well exemplifying this line of interpretation is R. J. O'Connell's discussion of how Augustine abandoned hope for Monica's participation in an intellectual vision of God. Once Augustine recognized the limits to his mother's philosophical abilities, so the argument goes, he could not expect her to share the delights that awaited himself and his friends. O'Connell surmises: "The impression is unavoidable: Augustine's wild hope of making a philosopher of Monica has met with shipwreck. Her 'mind' and her 'talent' for such matters were probably more than anything a creation of her son's perfervid imagination; in any case, her 'contempt' for his way of reason seems quite emphatically to have 'remained complete'."[4] Such is

2. "Qui autem sola auctoritate contenti bonis tantum moribus rectisque uotis constanter operam dederint, aut contemnentes, aut non ualentes disciplinis liberalibus atque optimis erudiri, beatos eos quidem, cum inter homines uiuunt, nescio quomodo appellem " (*ord.* 2.9.26; CCL 29.122).

3. *ord.* 2.10.28; CCL 29.123.

4. Robert J. O'Connell, *St. Augustine's Early Theory of Man, A.D. 381–391* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), 231; similarly, though in a discussion about ecclesiology rather than education, John

the disquieting conclusion to which Augustine's view, at least as O'Connell imagines it, would lead.

Although Augustine's view of the place of authority within education certainly developed, O'Connell's analysis leaves an unbalanced impression.[5] While it is true that Augustine emphasized (perhaps in the light of his own later thought, overemphasized)[6] the place of reason in the soul's ascent as facilitated through the study of the liberal arts, other texts should lead us to qualify this interpretation. Against O'Connell, Augustine's position may be stated more precisely: however much Augustine praises the independent exercise of rational thought, it must be interpreted against the background of a more basic affirmation of the necessity of authority. *Non aperiat nisi auctoritas ianuam.* Nothing except authority opens the door, as he says.[7] In the order of being reason and rational demonstration take priority; in the sequence of *time* it is only by the mediation of authority that we arrive at an understanding of God and the soul. The development of the intelligence requires the instruction of others and depends also, so Augustine thinks, upon the authority of the revelation of God.[8] This interpretation is sub-

---

Calvin cites *De ordine* 2.9 to prove that Augustine would have us base our belief on more certain grounds than the authority of the Church, cf. *Institutio Christianae Religionis* 1.7.3.

5. Similar to O'Connell, although more nuanced, is O'Meara's "Saint Augustine's View of Authority and Reason in A.D. 386," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 18 (1951): 338–46, which claims: "Augustine believed in A.D. 386 that reason could arrive at an understanding of what was taught by revelation" (344–45). As I show below, this position becomes less defensible and requires more qualification as additional texts are taken into account.

6. On the role of the authority of the Church in Augustine's thought, see Pierre Batiffol, *Le Catholicisme de Saint Augustin,* 2nd ed. (Paris: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1920).

7. "qualem se debeat praebere docentibus et quali uita esse docilis posit, euenit, ut omnibus bona magna et occulta discere cupientibus non aperiat nisi auctoritas ianuam" (*ord.* 2.9.26; CCL 29.122).

8. *ord.* 2.16.

stantiated not only by the conversation but also through the action of Augustine's Cassiciacum dialogues.

Take first the authority of the teacher. In the *De ordine,* the teacher serves as the immediate authority in the student's development. The teacher orchestrates amenable conditions for learning. He ensures that material necessities are provided for and that the activities of the day unfold according to a structure conducive to learning. For example, there is provision for regular meals, free time is allotted, and a pattern of daily prayer and discussion established. Augustine will make sure conversation stops in time for lunch; he is sensitive to the impact of weather; and he employs a secretary to record the conversations for future reference.[9] Augustine also exercises his authority in the education and correction of his pupils' nonrational sentiments. At one point the dialogue records how Trygetius failed to attribute divinity to Christ; once the mistake was pointed out to him, he wanted the scribe to omit his words from his record of the conversation. Perhaps out of envy, Licentius objected; when Augustine then rebuked Licentius, Trygetius himself began to grin at the sight of his friend's chastisement. Seeing this, Augustine shamed them both (*ord.* 2.10.29–30). The contact experienced between teacher and pupils at Cassiciacum brings to mind the intimate relations fostered in ancient philosophical academies.

What is the meaning of such a scene? Recall that according to Aristotle, since shame always accompanies the recognition of guilt, it cannot properly be called a virtue. Not that it is wrong to feel shame. Shame, rather, is the proper response of one who has *already* acted badly. And encouraging its sensation *is* an effective method for correcting youth. Aristotle thinks we have no choice but to cultivate sensitivity to shame as a means of habituating the young; this is so because they particularly are controlled by feelings more than by rational habit. Pleasure and pain need to be applied against their

9. *ord.* 1.8.25, 1.8.26, 1.8.25, 1.2.5.

feelings in order to help them desire appropriate states of character (*Eth. Nic.* 128B). Without the presence of shame, then, habituation to virtuous states of character would become practically impossible. By including such a scene I suggest Augustine is illustrating the significance of nonrational modes of habituation, especially in the education of the young. This is a clear instance where the acquisition of virtue has become the immediate object of Augustine's lesson. So, in view of the background to traditional education we looked at in chapter 1, here we are able to recognize Augustine in action as a model teacher of philosophy. Recalling Hadot's analysis, Augustine's programme is a school for virtue, an extended sequence of exercises that equip students for the good life.

More significant still, the action of the dialogue vividly portrays how study is supported by friendship. Augustine initiates his students into a scholarly community based upon Christian friendship and the pursuit of truth. At Cassiciacum there are no commuters. Each one is able to know the other according to that intimacy that is born out of a shared life, and Augustine will use this to his full advantage. He is willing to exercise the special kind of authority which friendship makes possible. This may be illustrated, for instance, in the events which lead up to the conversion of Licentius. His student's breakthrough happens one evening after the household finds itself gathered around a gurgling water pipe. A chance annoyance creates the occasion for informal inquiry into the principles of causation. The young pupils together ask: What is causing the irregular flow of water in the villa? It is, finally, not a planned seminar but a midnight conference that allows Licentius to suffer the weight of wonder at the order of creation, and ultimately to turn to philosophy. From a puzzle about causation Augustine accompanies Licentius in the turn toward first principles, away from poetry toward a new first love, wisdom.[10]

10. *ord.* 1.7.19. Since Augustine's *De ordine* is a *dialogue* the action and setting communicate no less than the conversations recorded. The learning condi-

Beyond the action of the dialogue, the importance of authority in the *De ordine* is also clear from Augustine's direct allocutions. If the young need correction by appeals to what is beneath reason, the mature depend upon that source that is above reason. In his exercise of reason the philosophical Christian does not outgrow his need for divine authority. Augustine initiates his students into a community formed by human teachers to be sure; but more important is the authority exercised by the divine teacher, Christ. Augustine's school at Cassiciacum certainly looks back to traditional models. It also introduces concepts and practices less common within ancient pagan practice. Along these lines, one sign of genuine divine authority is the miraculous display of power. Where a purposeful display of force transcends human capacity *(transcendit omnem humanam facultatem)* we have reason to suppose a divine cause. Augustine thinks that a relevant display of power has in fact occurred, most gloriously in the resurrection of Christ. This same Christ has left his presence among men and women through the activity of the Church. Thus, purged by the authority of the mysteries *(mysteriorum auctoritate purgatur)*[11] as mediated by the Church's sacraments and instruction, men experience healing even now. Augustine will say more about the Church's role in education in later works (e.g., *De doctrina Christiana, De catechizandis rudibus, Enchiridion*). For the moment let us note only this about the Church's pedagogy: in Augustine's mind at 386 divine grace is clearly necessary. We need grace insofar as divine knowledge and power is mediated to human beings through the Church's Scriptures, teaching, and sacramental life. How these forms mediate grace Augustine does not at

tions that Augustine the teacher constructs form the backdrop and support the structure of the educational enterprise as Augustine presents it in *De ordine.* For an examination of the philosophical significance of the dialogue form in general, see *Platonic Writings, Platonic Readings,* ed. Charles L. Grisworld (London: Routledge, 1988).

11. *ord.* 2.9.27; CCL 29.122–23.

this point elaborate; that such graces, mediated by authority, are required, he is already sure.

This insight into Augustine's pedagogy has too often been obscured in discussions that address themselves to one or another aspect of Augustine's early doctrine of salvation. It has been suggested, for example, that the Augustine of the Cassiciacum period conceived of salvation as something that could be achieved (at least all but achieved) through philosophical reasoning alone. Along with this, one trend within twentieth-century scholarship has sought to stretch out as wide as possible the distance between the young Augustine and the old, between the pliable Neoplatonist at Milan and the obdurate bishop of Hippo.

Brown and Harrison on Augustine's "Lost Future"

Perhaps the most poetic statement of this interpretation, and certainly the one most responsible for its dissemination, is that given by Peter Brown. According to Brown, early on Augustine had come to believe that human beings could attain perfection in this life: climbing the mountain of sanctity, it would be possible for them to see God and experience moral reparation before death. This vision was then shattered, so he argued, after Augustine had learnt to read Paul anew, which meant less as a Platonizing philosopher.[12] Somewhere over the decade between his conversion and the writing of his *Confessions* Augustine realized that his dream of sustaining a permanent vision of God in this life was simply fantasy. As Brown memorably wrote:

> Augustine, indeed had decided that he would never reach the fulfilment that he first thought was promised to him by a Christian Platonism: he would never impose a victory of mind over body in himself, he would never achieve the rapt contemplation of the ideal philosopher. It is the

12. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo,* 145, and see his chapter titled "The Lost Future."

most drastic change that a man may have to accept: it involved nothing less than the surrender of the bright future he thought he had gained at Cassiciacum.[13]

Brown's claim has recently been subject to a detailed scholarly examination, notably in Carol Harrison's *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology* (2006). Her aim is to correct what she perceives to be a bias within Augustinian scholarship: the interpretation of Augustine's early period as read through the lens of Brown's 1967 thesis.[14] Without commenting on Augustine's intellectual development generally, I do wish to take up Harrison's counterthesis on the question of the place of the grace of God in this life, and the question of how far along the road to God Augustine thought we could travel before death. I shall argue that Harrison's renarration of Augustine's earliest ideas of human perfectibility is a helpful corrective to Brown's overstated contrast between the early and the late Augustine. In my view Harrison is correct to emphasize the idea that Augustine always believed that we require God's grace in this life. Yet, aspects of her exegesis are overstated: it seems that Brown is correct that Augustine did (even if inconsistently and for a time) believe that perfec-

13. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo,* 140.

14. In her preface she identifies the tendency among Augustine scholarship to treat Augustine the convert as a "recognizably different and alien person to the bishop of Hippo"—a habit she finds "in almost every book, article, and paper one reads on Augustine." In contrast, her work seeks to demonstrate that there "is a clear continuity between Augustine the new convert and Augustine the new bishop" (vi). She continues: "The early Augustine has been well and truly flattened, demolished, and obliterated by the 'Pauline revolution.' It is this interpretation of the first decade of his work—one which I think is now almost universally followed—which I would like to question. I do not think the Augustine of the early works, even the works he wrote on retreat at Cassiciacum immediately after his conversion, is another, recognizably different and alien person, to the bishop of Hippo. There is a clear continuity between Augustine the new convert and Augustine the new bishop which I think has been ignored and which it is the purpose of this book to identify—not least, I want to question the real significance of Augustine's reading of Paul in the mid-390s"; see *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology,* vi–vii.

tion could be achieved in this life. In taking up this issue our goal is to sort out Augustine's (early) view of the role of grace in education.

Brown claims that Augustine once believed in the possibility of perfection but then abandoned that hope. As evidence for this view he observes that by Augustine's move to Carthage and certainly by his writing of *De sermone Domini in monte* (A.D. 393/4) he had given up on the Platonic notion of spiritual ascent that had so dominated his earlier thinking. Quoting once again from "The Lost Future": "The idea of the spiritual life as vertical ascent, as a progress towards a final, highest stage to be reached in this life, had fascinated Augustine in the previous years. Now, he will see in Paul nothing but a single, unresolved tension between 'flesh' and 'spirit.'"[15] In order to make his case, over the next six pages Brown cites or alludes to a litany of texts drawn principally from *De libero arbitrio* book 2, *Ad Simplicianum de diversis quaestionibus,* and the *Retractationes.*

Harrison's critique of this has two parts. She asks us to read one set of texts as describing what is merely an ideal for Augustine. Over against these, she takes another set of texts to represent Augustine's literal opinion: the first set should be interpreted through the lens of the second. Concerning Augustine's "ideal" Harrison is quick to acknowledge that numerous passages *appear* to warrant Brown's interpretation (cf. *b. vita* 4.15; *sol.* 1.23; *ord.* 2.19.50–51; *s. Dom. mon.* 1.2.9). She concedes that although Augustine does not claim to have had a direct vision of God, he nevertheless did believe that a few great souls had and, furthermore, that their experiences form the basis of what these "great souls" have said about God. Augustine offers an intriguing statement along these lines in the *De quantitate animae* (A.D. 387/8):

15. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo,* 145.

What shall I say are the delights, what the enjoyment, of the supreme and true Goodness, what the everlasting peace it breathes upon us? Great and peerless souls—and we believe that they have actually seen and are still seeing these things [*quas etiam videsse ac videre ista credimus*]—have told us this so far as they deemed it should be spoken of.

Thus far Harrison quotes in her exposition. Augustine's text, however, continues with the following:

This plainly would I tell you now: if we shall hold most faithfully to the course which God enjoins on us and which we have undertaken to follow, we shall come, through the power and wisdom of God [*per virtutem dei atque sapientiam*], to that supreme Cause or that supreme Author or that supreme Principle of all things—or whatever other more apt name one may give for so great a reality. With this insight [*quo intellect*], we shall see truly how all things under the sun are the vanity of the vain.[16]

Three questions arise from the above: who are these "great souls," what is the character of their vision, and does Augustine think he can attain to the same? To the first question, Augustine could only be referring to the Apostles and the inspired writers of the Scriptures. Harrison (like O'Meara) adds that Augustine also likely had in mind other wise men "with the requisite intellectual ability to grasp the truth through reason," figures presumably like Plato and Plotinus.[17] I think that is improbable. As Augustine goes on to explain, in the light of what such "great souls" saw and what we hope to see, he expects we shall grasp Christian mysteries—like the incarnation and the resurrection of the body—with more certainty than is our apprehension of the setting of the sun.[18] Since neither Plato

16. "Illud plane nunc ego audeo tibi dicere, nos si cursum, quem nobis deus imperat et quem tenendum suscepimus, constantissime tenuerimus, perventuros per virtutem dei atque sapientiam ad summam illam causam vel summum auctorem vel summum principium rerum omnium vel si quo alio modo res tanta congruentius adpellari potest; quo intellecto vere videbimus, quam sint omnia sub sole vanitas vanitantium" (*quant.* 33.76; CSEL 89.223–224).

17. Cf. Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology,* 64, and O'Meara, *The Greatness of the Soul* (FC 9), 214 n.101.

18. *quant.* 33.76.

nor Plotinus hoped in the resurrection of the body Augustine probably did not have them in mind.

As to whether Augustine thought he was eligible for a similar vision, Harrison believes that these and other texts that "seem to entertain the possibility of attaining the truth" are really only "statements of theory and aspiration."[19] But why should we suppose this difference in intent? Harrison's distinction lacks a textual basis. Indeed, several texts point us in the very opposite direction, namely, to the view that Augustine literally did at this time believe the ideal could be made actual. We might consider, for instance, how at the end of *De quantitate animae* 33.76 (a little further on from the passage cited above) Augustine gives no indication that he is referring to a "heavenly state." Rather, he intimates that at least some Christians will attain the seventh degree of the soul *in this life.*[20] Similarly, now glancing at a slightly later text, at *s. Dom. mon.* 1.2.9 Augustine argues that the subjection of passion to the mind is the prize of victory and that this prize is given to men of goodwill, on earth *(in terra),*[21] and that such peace is the condition of life of the perfect wise man. In sum, these do not appear to be conjectural statements of aspiration.

How about interpreting these texts through the lens of other passages? Here Harrison has asked us to give hermeneutical priority to a second set of texts that emphasize the need to "fight a continuous battle with the distractions of the senses."[22] Her claim is that whereas the first texts are expressions of theory, the later co-

19. Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology,* 64.

20. Augustine confirms that he is anticipating this knowledge before death in his final sentences of this text. Whatever degree of contemplation one reaches, i.e., whether you attain stages 1 or 7, on the basis of what is achievable *in this life* every Christian can regard death not with sorrow but with anticipation (*quant.* 33.76).

21. "Et haec est pax *quae datur in terra hominibus bonae uoluntatis,* haec uita consummati perfectique sapientis" (emphasis mine) (*s. Dom. mon.* 1.2.9; CCL 35.6).

22. Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology,* 65.

incide with our actual empirical experience, and hence, she argues, must reflect Augustine's literal opinion on the matter. Our focus is primarily upon Augustine's texts up to ordination (A.D. 391); but, in order to engage with Harrison it may be helpful for a moment to look just beyond our period. As her primary evidence Harrison cites this passage from *De sermone Domini in monte* (A.D. 393/5):

> *Yet in this life* [*Quod tamen in hac uita*] so long as we carry our present mortality, into which we were led by the persuasion of the serpent, it is not to be hoped that this can be the case; but yet we are to hope that *at some future time* it will take place [*sed tamen aliquando futurum sperandum est*] . . . we should with the most ardent love seek after what we have understood, from the Lord's revealing it. . . . For thus, after the remaining burden of this mortality has been laid down in the act of dying, there shall be perfected in every part of man at the fit time, the blessedness which has been begun in this life, and which we have from time to time strained every nerve to lay hold of and secure (emphasis mine).[23]

Harrison is right to conclude that in this passage Augustine argues against earthly perfection and, in principle, it is not unreasonable to elevate some texts as more representative than others. The problem is that we do not find sufficient textual reasons to believe that this passage is more authoritative than the ones already discussed from *De sermone Domini in monte* or *De quantitate animae*. In the *De quantitate animae* text Augustine tells us we can hope to attain the seventh level of the soul, where "here we no longer have a level but in reality a home" in which one enjoys blessedness (33.76); by contrast, in the second (but not the first) passage we looked at from

23. Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology,* 65; Harrison's translation: "Quod tamen in hac uita, quam diu istam mortalitatem circumferimus, in quam serpentina persuasione inducti sumus, non sperandum est posse fieri; sed tamen aliquando futurum sperandum est . . . et id quod domino revelante appetendum esse intellexerimus flagrantissima caritate appetamus. Ita enim reliquo mortalitatis huius onere ipsa morte deposito ex omni hominis parte oportuno tempore perficietur beatitudo, quae in hac uita inchoata est, et cui capessendae atque obtinendae aliquando nunc omnis conatus inpenditur" (2.9.35; CCL 35.125–26).

De sermone Domini in monte we have no such earthly dwelling. All three passages cited are written in the same literary form; two are taken from the same text, and thus these have the same audience and occasion in view. There appears, in short, no relevant literary or contextual features among these texts that would allow us to apply different principles of interpretation. The best way to account for the discrepancy, I think, is simply to recognize that Augustine either made a mistake or changed his mind.[24] While the dogmatic theologian can (and indeed should) apply various methods of interpretation to scriptural and other texts within the tradition in order to harmonize potentially conflicting sources of authority, it is less clear that this method is open to the historian. Far from demonstrating how we can distinguish between the real and the ideal passages in Augustine, Harrison appears to have shifted from historian to theologian without justifying her move.[25]

Having criticized Harrison's interpretation on this score, she is nevertheless right to emphasize that when Augustine mentions the vision or revelation of truth he typically "couples it with an exhortation to live by faith, hope, and love" in this life.[26] For example, in the *De quantitate animae* Augustine emphasizes that we shall

24. To this we could add the further confusion of Augustine's adamant refusal to concede that he ever held beatitude possible in this life, as for example, at *retr.* 1.7.5 (commenting on *mor.* 1.30.64).

25. Furthermore, as Augustine took more account of Pelagianism he became less willing to consider moral perfection achievable in this life. See Robert Dodaro's discussion in *Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), and particularly at p. 93 where he notes a shift in Augustine's writing about grace after 411 and the singularity of Christ's conquest over temptation: "In order to strengthen his argument against the Pelagians that Christ's total freedom from sin and fear of death is not a function simply of his human nature, but that it is grounded in the substantial unity between his human and divine natures, Augustine begins in AD 411 to speak of Christ explicitly as 'one person' (*una persona*) when discussing the uniqueness of his virtue as compared to that of all other human beings."

26. Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology,* 65.

only come to the seventh level "through the power and wisdom of God" *(per virtutem dei atque sapientiam).*[27] Augustine here (as elsewhere) argues that in the order of time we must first accept what the Church teaches by faith and then only afterward, in the light of vision, "we shall recognize how true are the things we have been commanded to believe."[28] The believer overcomes temporary epistemological deficiencies by accepting conclusions that the Church proposes for reasons that are only later fully understood. In other words, at times Augustine thought perfection is possible; but never did he believe that it could be attained apart from God's help.[29] That his early works emphasize and never deny the need for grace is also how Augustine interpreted these discussions: looking back at his treatments of grace and free will from a distance of 40 years and with the insight afforded by nearly as many years of debate with Manichees, Donatists, and finally Pelagians, Augustine denied that he significantly changed his view about the relationship between human nature and Christ's grace, particularly in relation to charges made against his *De libero arbitrio.* In this way, in his *Retractationes* (A.D. 428) Augustine explains that the purpose of *De libero arbitrio* was not to discuss grace but to contradict the Manichees on two counts: insofar as they deny that evil is due to free choice of will; and inasmuch as they blame God for evil.[30]

Disagreement over Augustine's early views on grace is nothing new. Debate originally arose after Pelagius took to quoting Au-

27. *quant.* 33.76; CSEL 89.224.

28. "Tunc agnoscemus, quam vera nobis credenda imperata sint" (*quant.* 33.76; CSEL 89.224).

29. But this is in contrast to the early Augustine. As Burns notes in his conclusion to his study of Augustine's doctrine of grace: "By the time he began to argue against Pelagius, [Augustine] no longer relied on the natural human desire for God as a foundation for the process of salvation. Instead he asserted that the gift of charity provides the only effective orientation toward human beatitude"; see *The Development of Augustine's Doctrine of Operative Grace,* 185.

30. *retr.* 1.9.2.

gustine against Augustine. Pelagius, in the course of justifying his own views, found it useful to suggest how his own opinions could be lifted from the pages of Augustine himself—as for instance, when in *De natura* Pelagius quotes *De libero arbitrio* to support his claim that the human will can avoid sin.[31] Augustine replied that Pelagius quotes out of context; he then argued that if Pelagius had bothered to use other passages from the same writing there would be no controversy between them! In claiming this Augustine thus implies that, "taken as a whole, *De libero arbitrio* already contains the essential rebuttal of Pelagian positions, in particular concerning man's natural capacity to avoid sin [*impeccantia*]."[32] Augustine's own retrospective view was that he had always acknowledged the need for grace, even if in some works this was not the immediate object of his concern.[33]

How credible is that claim? Scholars have pointed to the difficulties involved with Augustine's later interpretation of his early works. Some have argued, for instance, that *Ad Simplicianum* (A.D. 396) marks a substantial shift in Augustine's thinking about grace. Where formerly Augustine had interpreted Romans 7:15–24 as St. Paul's description of the interior struggle of the unbaptized, after *Ad Simplicianum* and in response to Pelagian accounts of merit, Augustine came increasingly to understand St. Paul's words as a description of the moral distress that Christians suffer even while living in the state of grace.[34] And, after A.D. 411, Augustine will emphasize the abso-

31. See Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society in Augustine,* 80.

32. See Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society in Augustine,* 80–94, and, for Pelagius's own views, *Pelagius' Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans,* trans. with introduction and notes by Theodore de Bruyn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

33. On this, see James Wetzel, "Pelagius Anticipated: Grace and Election in Augustine's *Ad Simplicianum*," in *Augustine from Rhetor to Theologian,* ed. Joanne McWilliam (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1992), 121–32.

34. William Babcock, "Augustine's Interpretation of Romans (AD 394–396)," AugStud 10 (1979): 55–74.

lutely unique character of Christ's conquest of sin and temptation, even when compared to such heroic Christians as St. Paul.[35] Though Augustine's views on grace certainly "developed" in various ways, for our purposes it is enough to acknowledge that he always recognized the human need to rely upon God for our beatitude.[36] For our ends, that means neither the immediate, the proximate, nor the final purposes of liberal education can be fully accomplished apart from the action of grace working in the soul of the student. With Harrison I believe we can agree that whether this ascent is considered through the liberal arts, through the ascent of the levels of the soul, or through the virtues, God is always present, always an object of faith, hope, and love.[37]

We do not need to impose a theory of two levels of texts. Harrison is right that Augustine at all times considered divine aid necessary; she is correct to emphasize that the substantive revolution in his thought came not in 396 but with his initial conversion to Christianity, and in his acknowledgment of human need for grace in the return to God. Nevertheless, Brown's thesis of a bright future lost remains intact inasmuch as Augustine did come to abandon his hope for earthy perfection that, at some points at least, he once clearly did hold.[38]

35. For a careful analysis of much of the relevant secondary literature on this topic, see Dodaro's *Christ and the Just Society in Augustine,* 82–87.

36. For an outline of Augustine's development on grace, see Burns's *The Development of Augustine's Doctrine of Operative Grace*; though Augustine's view on grace has a history, Gilson observes that the underlying continuity of his position springs from his own experience of the conflict and resolution of a divided will: "The point which dominates the whole history of the controversy is that Pelagianism was a radical negation of Augustine's personal experience. . . . Since the will desires the good, it is by nature destined to accomplish it; since it is still unable to carry out the good it desires, there is something damaged within it. . . . The solution to the enigma is that here as elsewhere, we must receive what we would have if we cannot provide it ourselves"; see *The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine,* 159.

37. Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology,* 41.

38. See also John Rist's conclusion to his review of Harrison's book, where he

Authority and Reason

We may take this same question from another point of view. Even though Augustine believed in the possibility of temporal human perfection, it does not follow that Augustine ever thought reason could *displace* authority in the movement of ascent. Once again we find Augustine climbing between alternatives as he works to clarify ideas. As I hope will become clear, for the simple and for the philosophical believer alike authority retains its vital position within their education.

The first book of *Contra Academicos* appears to contradict this claim. In the midst of a discussion on whether a person seeking for truth can be perfect Trygetius tells Licentius that he should stop slavishly following the opinion of Cicero, and begin thinking for himself. This is what *he* has done; Trygetius invites his friend to do the same. As he boasts, in accordance with the freedom that philosophy itself promises *(se philosophia pollicetur),* I have already cast off "that yoke of authority" *(iugum illud auctoritatis).*[39] What are we to make of this? Here philosophy is clearly elevated above authority. But note the context. The speaker is Trygetius, not Augustine. Note also the intent. The scene aims not at generating general conclusions about reason or authority, but to show how Cicero's opinion should not be slavishly followed. It is perfectly compatible to argue that *some* authorities need to be cast aside without denigrating the value of authority per se. Licentius's love for Cicero kept him from following the logic of the argument: it is to this that

writes: "[Harrison] is right to think that Augustine was always inclined to attribute all to grace, but wrong to deny that for a while—even inconsistently—he also taught that grace, freely sought by the believer, could generate perfection in this present life." See Rist's "Review of Carol Harrison's *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology,*" *New Blackfriars* 87 (September 2006): 542–44, at 543; similarly, see Chad Tyler Gerber's review in *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 120–22.

39. *c. Acad.* 1.3.9; CCL 29.8.

Trygetius objects.[40] In addition, recall that at the very conclusion of the dialogue, where Augustine summarizes their findings, he explicitly affirms that we are impelled to learn "by the twofold weight of authority and reason" *(gemino pondere . . . auctoritatis atque rationis).*[41] Most significantly: Augustine says he will never depart from the authority of Christ because he finds none that is more powerful *(ualentiorem).* So, here at least, Augustine does not affirm that philosophy cancels the need for every authority.

A second text that may appear to denigrate the place of authority comes from an oft-cited passage in *De ordine.* Here I wish to correct R. J. O'Connell's interpretation as developed in *Saint Augustine's Early Theory of Man* (1968). My claim is that in the *De ordine,* which is where O'Connell's exegesis also concentrates, philosophy never transcends authority, even for the intelligent.[42] Indeed, one of the means by which grace is mediated to the soul is *through* authorities of various kinds. In a central text, Augustine describes the twofold path of reason and authority:

Duplex enim est uia quam sequimur, cum rerum nos obscuritas mouet, aut rationem, aut certe auctoritatem. Philosophia rationem promittit et uix paucissimos liberat, quos tamen non modo non contemnere illa mysteria, sed sola intelligere, ut intelligenda sunt, cogit.[43]

40. *c. Acad.* 1.3.8–9.

41. *c. Acad.* 3.20.43–45; CCL 29.60–61. Perhaps we should not be surprised at Augustine's insistence at this. After all, as Karl-Heinrich Lütcke has pointed out, there are classical antecedents (e.g., in Cicero and Seneca) to the notion of *ratio* and *auctoritas* as two parallel ways; for examples, see *"Auctoritas" bei Augustin* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1968), 45–46.

42. Incidentally, on the question of the relation between authority and reason, I believe Harrison's interpretation (cf. 41–48) will be shown to be much closer to the text of O'Connell.

43. *ord.* 2.5.16; CCL 29.115–16. The standard English translation runs: "Philosophy sends forth reason, and it frees scarcely a few. By itself it compels these not only not to spurn those mysteries, but to understand them insofar as they can be understood." Cf. Robert Russell's translation, *Divine Providence and the Problem of Evil* (FC 5), 291.

O'Connell's principal mistake on this text concerns *the kind of liberation* Augustine attributes to reason. On O'Connell's view, the protasis contains the significant determination: salvation is *for the very few (vix paucissimos).* In other words, for some, reason will be a sufficient guide. I suggest, however, that the emphasis lies not in the small number of persons involved, but on the *quality* of their liberation. The passage becomes clearer if we put to it this question: What does philosophy free some people to do? Here is a turgid but literal translation:

> When the obscurity of things moves us, twofold is the path that we follow: either reason, or at least authority. Philosophy sends reason and frees the smallest number—with difficulty. [Philosophy] by itself compels [*cogit*] these few not only not to despise those mysteries but to contemplate them insofar as they can be understood [*intelligere ut intelligenda sunt*].

This text alone does not positively demonstrate our claim (that philosophy never transcends authority). But neither should it be used to imply that reason trumps authority. It seems merely to affirm that philosophy has as its proper goal contemplation. On the work of reason two points bear emphasis. First, what *results* from reason's activity is indeed a liberation, but it is neither equivalent to nor in competition with Christian salvation. Liberation and salvation are not identical concepts. Rather, the liberation that philosophy offers is really a preamble. It prepares the Christian to search out and consider the content of the mysteries given through revelation. So philosophy (what imaginatively sends forth reason) equips a believer to contemplate the nature of the mysteries which Christ through his Church has *already* made available. Which is to say, secondly, that the *activity* of *ratio* is contemplation. *Ratio* marches into the world less as an inventor than as an explorer.

Also note Augustine's restriction of the subject of the verb. He tells us that he is describing the *via* which *sequimur,* the way that *we*

follow. It is not the path of everyone. The twofold method is what those who *already* accept Christian revelation may walk upon: these are not alternatives open to Platonists, but only to those who have submitted themselves to the efficacy of the mysteries. This interpretation is confirmed by the immediate context where, in the very next sentences, Augustine contrasts the substantive teaching of Platonist philosophy over and against the Christian mysteries. As he claims, the genuine Philosophy *(germana philosophia)* is capable of teaching three things: that there is a *principium sine principio,* a principle without any beginning; philosophy teaches how great is the *intellectus* dwelling in this principle; finally, it tells us what has come from this *principium* for our welfare.[44] Philosophy tells much, but the mysteries deliver more. The Platonists know the *unum Deum omnipotentem,* one God and all-powerful. Christian teaching goes further. Philosophy learns from religion that the divine is also tripotent: revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Moreover, this same God has taken on human flesh. Because the Platonist considers history irrelevant to philosophy, to his discredit, he ignores that which has become determinative: the words and deeds of Jesus of Nazareth.

Other texts corroborate this interpreatation. As Augustine well points out, historical claims must be either accepted or rejected on the basis of evidence supplied by others; the main evidence open to us concerning past events is that which we receive by the testimony of witnesses. As he argues in *De vera religione* (A.D. 390), Catholic Christology (and by extension soteriology) is rooted in, though by no means limited to, concrete claims about the words and deeds of the historical Jesus of Nazareth. All people are called to believe in the Resurrection; but only a few saw Christ risen from the dead. Religion that appeals to historical revelation is, thus, in principle com-

44. *ord.* 2.5.16; CCL 29.116.

mitted to some claims that derive their credibility from statements that can only be accepted on authority. In this way, insofar as philosophy refuses in principle to admit evidence that can be known only from authority, philosophy ignores history to its own peril.[45] Only through the Church's witness do we learn about the life of Jesus. Only through a divinely instituted authority does the truth about God's becoming man become made known. Thus, Augustine concludes that the doctrine of the One God's taking on of human flesh is known and loved by every *verus philosophus.*[46] His maturing opinion is summarized in the pithy advice given to his friend Romanianus in 390: "Accordingly, may you repudiate all those who neither philosophise about sacred things nor attach sacred rites to philosophy."[47] Because the central dogma of Christian faith is rooted in history, authority is needed for the clever and simple alike.

Physical circumstance matters, the presence of a teacher matters, the Church matters. In the provision for material conditions of his school, in the appeal to shame, and in the teachings of the mysteries, the action and argument of the *De ordine* illustrates clearly how authority remains the door to understanding. We may therefore agree with O'Connell that rational independence is the goal of education in *De ordine*; but, we conclude that Augustine always affirms our need of God to achieve that goal. It is therefore misleading to call Augustine's a theory of "intellectualist salvation."[48]

45. *vera rel.* 3.3, 7.13.

46. Both philosophy and the character of the philosopher are redefined through its encounter with historical revelation. As Augustine will later formulate it in the following syllogism: "If Wisdom is identical with God, through which all things have been made (as divine authority and the truth testify) then the true philosopher is the lover of God" (Porro si sapientia deus est, per quem facta sunt omnia, sicut diuina auctoritas ueritasque monstrauit, uerus philosophus est amator Dei) (*civ. Dei.* 8.1; CCL 47. 216).

47. "Repudiatis igitur omnibus, qui neque in sacris philosophantur nec in philosophia consecrantur" (*vera rel.* 7.12; CCL 32.196).

48. O'Connell, *St. Augustine's Early Theory of Man, A.D. 381–391,* 227.

Such a description is confusing because it fails to capture the actual conditions for progress that, according to Augustine, includes nonrational habituation to virtue and openness to divine authority.

Pious Study versus Kantian Autonomy

If authority remains the door to understanding, how do we open it? Having explored the value of authority we turn, next, to consider how Augustine thinks faith *(fides)* or the act of belief *(credere)* helps one to move closer to understanding. We shall look at this question through the lens of Augustine's discussions on pious study; after that we conclude by showing how Augustine's conception of theological method as *fides quaerens intellectum* best captures his view of the relation between reason and authority in the quest for knowledge.[49] But first let me sketch a more familiar and contrasting conception of authority, known to us through Kant and modern philosophers of education who share a similar view of autonomy. The contrast is best seen against the light of Augustine's proximate purpose for education, which underscores the necessity of the student's enculturation into a community whose identity is shaped by a specific tradition of enquiry.

Since Kant it has become familiar to us to conceive of human maturity as autonomy. According to Kant, and the liberal tradition that developed after him, morality requires that individuals be allowed and indeed be encouraged to become autonomous agents:

49. That phrase has enjoyed a long currency in the history of Christian philosophy up to our own day, in part because St. Anselm gave it new life again in the twelfth century by using it as the subtitle of his *Prosologion,* in part because modern popes such as Leo XIII and John Paul II have affirmed it as the proper banner under which philosophical thinking in the Church should be united. On this, see Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., "Can Philosophy Be Christian? The New State of the Question," in *The Two Wings of Catholic Thought: Essays on* Fides et Ratio, ed. David Ruel Foster and Joseph W. Koterski, S.J (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 3–21.

rule not by other objects or persons, but by oneself. Thus, in his famous 1784 "Answer to the Question: 'What Is Enlightenment?'" (*Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*), Kant announces:[50]

Enlightenment is the human being's emergence from his self-incurred dependence [*Unmündigkeit*]. *Dependence* is the inability to make use of one's own understanding without direction from another. This dependence is *self-incurred* when its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. *Sapere aude*! Have courage to make use of your own understanding! is thus the motto of enlightenment.

Being an adult, morally speaking, means being your own boss. The view of moral responsibility as autonomy, whose Kantian roots I mention, became influential also among contemporary educational philosophers. In the English-speaking tradition Kantian ideas were transmitted, preeminently, by John Dewey.[51] In 1913 Dewey wrote that, in the past, "learning has meant, on the whole, piling up, worshipping, and holding fast to what is handed down from the past with the title of knowledge."[52] The message is clear: independent discovery, not trust in authority as expressed in a community's teachers

50. Translation adapted from *An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?* in *Immanuel Kant: Practical Philosophy,* trans. and ed. Mary J. Gregor, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant,* general editors Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 17. For a sympathetic reconstruction of Kant's idea of autonomy of the will as the ground of moral obligation, see Allen W. Wood's *Kant's Ethical Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 156–90; for the historical development of the idea of autonomy before Kant, see Jerome B. Schneewind's *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), especially 514–15.

51. Idealism and authority were the twin dragons that modern Anglo-American philosophers of education would teach the young how to slay. Cf. "A Pre-History of Educational Philosophy in the United States: 1861–1914" in *Harvard Educational Review* 62, no. 2 (1992).

52. See John Dewey's article "*Philosophy of Education*" in *A Cyclopedia of Education,* 4.697–703.

or tradition, is the path to autonomy. Furthermore, Dewey's pragmatism assumed Kant's critique of knowledge. Knowledge of rationally discoverable final ends, like every other claim to knowledge, is impossible.[53] Education, rather, is an experimental activity that helps students to adapt to ends dictated by other methods. Translated into debates over the nature of religious education, Kant's political liberalism and his epistemological skepticism are manifest in the presumption, for example, that any position (religious or otherwise) is in principle capable of rational investigation by any person (religious or otherwise).[54] Those who think within this tradition regularly prefer an abstract conception of reason, unmediated by tradition, culture, or revelation, as a means of discovering universal justice.[55]

Over and against this modern view, Augustine considered philosophical and theological education to be integrally communal and essentially religious. Knowledge of God, the soul, and all that pertains to their relationship needs to be pursued "piously" if the educational endeavour is to succeed. Controversially, one mark of the pious search for knowledge is the acceptance of a mode of enquiry that adopts faith as a precondition to knowledge. Augustine argued that certain psychological preconditions need to be in place, or at least need to be hoped for, in the person who would take up the study of philosophy or theology. Some of these conditions he articulated in *De libero arbitrio.* In that dialogue Augustine and his pupil Evodius set out to consider a series of questions including: whether

53. Cf. John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (New York: Mentor Books, 1950), chapter 8, p. 150, and Howie's discussion in *Educational Theory and Practice in St. Augustine,* 305.

54. I take Keith Ward's articulation of the relationship between the enquiring subject and the subject matter of theology to be a sophisticated representative of this view; cf. "Why Theology Should Be Taught at Secular Universities," *Discourse* 4, no. 1 (2004–2005): 22–37, especially at 24, 30–32, and 37.

55. Potential problems of this Kantian position are becoming increasingly well known, also among educational philosophers; cf. Terence Copley's *Indoctrination, Education, and God: The Struggle for the Mind* (London: SPCK, 2005).

God is the cause of evil (book 1), whether God was justified to give human beings freedom of the will (book 2), and whether such a will, when it falls, can be considered morally culpable (book 3). At numerous points along the way Evodious's courage fails at the sight of what appear to him to be insurmountable challenges. Augustine, never an unsympathetic *magister,* responds in kindness to his student's frustrations.[56] Study is difficult. Philosophy can sometimes feel like bird watching in the middle of a fog. But more than offering sympathy, Augustine thinks there is a right and a wrong method for getting your head above the clouds. Throughout this dialogue he gives his student numerous suggestions, practical and theoretical, on how to get a clearer view. For instance, he tells Evodius:

> Take heart, and set out confidently and piously in the paths of reason. For there is nothing so arduous and difficult that it cannot be made most plain and straightforward by divine aid. And so, depending on him and praying for his aid, let us look into the question that we have asked.[57]

Further on in the same text, Augustine says that people fail to grasp that God's knowledge of future contingents is reconcilable with freedom *because* they do not enquire piously *(quia non pie quaerunt).*[58] It should be clear how Augustine's emphasis on authority, in this case the authority of God, contrasts sharply with the Kantian emphasis on the independent search for wisdom. As a point of entry into Augustine's specific claim that faith precedes understanding in the order of enquiry, let us explore further this difference between pious and impious study.

56. cf. *lib. arb.* 1.6, 1.10–11.

57. "Immo adesto animo et rationis uias pietate fretus ingredere. Nihil est enim tam arduum atque difficile, quod non deo adiuuante planissimum atque expeditissimum fiat. In ipsum itaque suspensi atque ab eo auxilium deprecantes, quod instituimus, quaeramus. Et prius responde mihi, utrum lex quae litteris promulgatur hominibus hanc uitam uiuentibus opituletur" (*lib. arb.* 1.7; CCL 29.219).

58. *lib arb.* 3.2.16; CCL 29.277.

"Nisi credideritis non intellegetis"

Although there are earlier anticipations,[59] Augustine first appeals to Isaiah 7:9 *(Nisi credideritis, non intellegetis)* at *De libero arbitrio* 1.2.11. At this point Augustine and Evodius are discussing the nature of learning and the question of whether it is possible to have knowledge of evil. Through a series of dialectical steps Evodius accepts that a tutor can only teach what is good; he then raises this dilemma: "since you have convinced me that we do not learn to do evil, tell me what is the cause of our evildoing" *(dic mihi unde male faciamus).*[60] Augustine's reply explains why, epistemologically—as distinct from the moral reasons we looked at in previous sections—faith is a prerequisite to understanding. Augustine replies in three steps. First, faith is a stage *(gradus)* on the way to understanding.[61] Supported by a confident trust in divine aid, Augustine encourages his pupil to view his present insight as a moment on the way toward fuller comprehension. Second, faith must believe that God possesses the highest perfections that can possibly be conceived *(optime de deo existimare).*[62] In ascribing to God the predications of omnipotence and impassibility, as a corollary, Augustine believes God must also have created the universe in total freedom, and from nothing *(de nihil creauerit omnia).*[63] That God cannot be the cause of evil need no longer remain an article of mere belief: Augustine's method of philosophical investigation, step three, is to draw his interlocutor through a series of dialectical moves that lead to the

59. For example, at *c. Acad.* 2.9, 3.43; *ord.* 2.16.26; *quant.* 12; cf. TeSelle, "Crede ut intellegas" in AugLex.

60. *lib. arb.* 1.2.10; CCL 29.213.

61. "Praescriptum enim per prophetam gradum, qui ait: *Nisi credideritis, non intellegetis,* tenere nos bene nobis conscii sumus" (*lib. arb.* 1.2.11; CCL 29.213).

62. "Optime namque de deo existimare uerissimum est pietatis exordium nec quisquam de illo optime existimat" (*lib. arb.* 1.2.12; CCL 29.213).

63. "Ex quo fit ut de nihilo creauerit omnia" (*lib. arb.* 1.2.13; CCL 29.213).

rational affirmation of a given thesis. This involves a range of dialectical applications, such as making definitions,[64] pointing out the internal inconsistencies or inadequacies of claims,[65] drawing out the implications of some propositions, as well as showing relevant logical connections between others.[66]

We can clear aside a number of potential misconceptions. Neither faith *(fides)* nor the act of belief *(credere)* is an unqualified good. Belief is a voluntary act, which, as such, needs to be exercised in relation to the correct objects and with the right intentions. It is possible to believe prematurely, foolishly, or conversely, to refuse stubbornly to believe at all.[67] As he will write at the end of his career, echoing the Book of James, even demons have a type of belief in God; but lacking *caritas,* their belief is useless and barren of saving merit.[68] Faith is never something Augustine sets *against reason*; indeed, insofar as there is a contrast to be made it is not between reason and faith, but between *reason and authority*.

As an aside, it is suggestive to consider Augustine's comments about the necessity of belief against the background of then contem-

64. Augustine challenges Evodius's presumption that he understands what evil is; they move toward a definition by first citing instances of evil deeds, arriving, finally, at the definition of cupidity as "the love of those things which one can lose against one's will" (earum rerum amorem, quas potest quisque inuitus amittere) (*lib. arb.* 1.4.31; CCL 29.217).

65. When Evodius argues that adultery is wrong because it violates the principle of equality, Augustine points out that there may be people who would willingly commit adultery with another man's wife and offer his own in exchange (*lib. arb.* 1.3.16–17).

66. This is illustrated well in Augustine's discussion that relates their newly acquired understanding of the difference between good and evil men to the two divisions of *lex,* human and divine. In his explanation, Augustine wants to account for why human law is still valuable even though it (a) inevitably allows some wrong doing to go unpunished (*lib. arb.* 1.5.41) and (b) at times can be used to contradict the natural law (cf. *lib. arb.* 1.3.19, 1.4.28 and 1.6.51–1.7.52).

67. *util. cred.* 10.23–11.25.

68. *f. et op.* 16.27.

porary Neoplatonic turn to oracles. Although some have claimed *De vera religione* was written in direct reply to Porphyry's *De regressu animae (On the Return of the Soul),*[69] Augustine's early and continued admiration for Porphyry is enough to warrant the possibility of his influence on Augustine's turn to history as a properly philosophical subject. To prove the high regard with which Augustine continued to hold Porphyry it will be sufficient to cite a late passage from *De civitate Dei* 10.32. Augustine paraphrases Porphyry's (ca. 232–ca. 305) opinion that:

> no doctrine has yet been established to form the teaching of a philosophical sect, which offers a universal way for the liberation of the soul; no such way has been produced by any philosophy (in the truest sense of the word), or by the moral teaching and disciplines of the Indians, or by the magical spells of the Chaldeans, or in any other way, and that this universal way had never been brought to his knowledge in his study of history.[70]

Porphyry's interest in the question of material forms of mediation and the value of inspired historical texts marks a significant shift from Plotinus.[71] Porphyry is, for instance, the first Greek philosopher known to have quoted the *Chaldaean Oracles.*[72] The next gen-

69. Du Roy, for instance, was keen to establish this: "On reconnaît le caractère antiporphyrien de ce thème à la présence toute nouvelle d'une polémique contre le culte des anges ou des démons. D'ailleurs plusiers traces du *De regressu animae* de Porphyre ont été récemment décelées dans le *De uera Religione*. Et celles du moins qu'on peut retenir comme certaines se situent toutes dans l'introduction, dans la conclusion et dans une des deux insertions dont nous venons de parler"; see his *L'intelligence de la foi en la trinité selon Saint Augustin*, 312–13. But also see TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian*, 125; and cf. John J. O'Meara's *Porphyry's Philosophy from Oracles in Augustine* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1959).

70. Trans. Bettenson, 421; cf. TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian* (London: Burns & Oats, 1970), 125.

71. But in comparison to Iamblichus, "Porphyry's attitude to theurgy was, however, decidedly more reserved…it was merely an easier first step for those unable to pursue philosophy directly." So writes Wallis, *Neoplatonism* (London: Duckworth, 1973), 108; cf. Porphyry's criticisms of theurgy written to a fictitious Egyptian priest in his *Letter to Anebo.*

72. Wallis, *Neoplatonism,* 105.

eration of Neoplatonic philosophers went even further along this direction. By Iamblicus (d. ca. 326), and then Julian the Apostate (d. 363), the turn to theurgy and the appeal to historical texts, such as the *Oracles,* had become philosophically respectable. Fourth-century Neoplatonism, then, had identified two religiously motivated epistemological problems that Augustine's reflections on faith also address. It sought to discover a mediation that would be universally accessible; and, it acknowledged the possibility of revelation as mediated through historical documents.[73] With his deepening awareness of Christian teaching, and likely with the then contemporary shift in Platonic philosophy in mind, Augustine's own thought correspondingly begins to take into account the importance of history in the drama of salvation.

On this Eugene TeSelle has remarked that, if at Cassiciacum Augustine defended the authoritative character of revelation, during his next four years his writings on belief emphasized the contingent character of the events narrated in Scripture.[74] This is another way of expressing what we have already seen in our treatment above of Augustine's defense of historical revelatory claims. In *De vera religione* (A.D. 389–391), *De utilitate credendi* (A.D. 391–392), and *De fide et symbolo* (A.D. 393), Augustine returns to the necessity of believing things that cannot be proved deductively.[75] In these texts Augustine emphasizes the indispensability of believing historical claims about mundane and supernatural ends. Thus, friendship

73. According to Augustine (*civ. Dei* 10.32), for example, Porphyry's aim was to search for a *via universalis animae liberandae.* On this, see Andrew Smith, *Porphyry's Place in the Neoplatonic Tradition* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), 129–41.

74. TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian,* 124; and see his survey "Credere" in Aug-Lex.

75. On the priority of faith in rational enquiry Augustine appears to come close to Clement of Alexandria (though I am not aware of any direct influence of Clement's); see Eric Osborn's discussion of *Stromateis* 2 and 5 in his *Clement of Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 159–96.

would be impossible "unless we believe some things that cannot be proved for certain."[76] Without trust social communication would crumble. Since direct access to the thoughts of other persons is not possible, we must once again exercise belief that what people say corresponds to what they actually think and feel.[77] We face a similar problem in religion. The philosopher has no good reason to cancel out the possibility of an historical revelation. Once this is granted, and historical claims to revelation have been made in Christianity, then it becomes imperative for the philosopher to establish criteria that would enable him to differentiate between a true and a false claim to revelation. On Augustine's view, enculturation into a community of learning includes also that community as it has existed over time, which is to say, as it belongs to a tradition whose identity is (at least partially) embedded within historical texts.

Tradition and Authority not Fideism

Augustine's wider educational precept that "we must believe in order to understand" both contradicts and implies certain propositions. It contradicts the notion that we can understand before believing; it implies that belief is not the end of insight but a stage along reason's path to understanding. Belief properly arises out of the concrete material conditions afforded by a community; but just because our beliefs arise in a certain time and place it does not follow that their validity are limited to certain times and places. Just because you learned to add on your parents' kitchen table does not mean that the truths of mathematics are confined to your hometown.

Against the pride of the philosophers, whether these are Neoplatonists or Manicheans, Augustine's claim is that belief is a moral precondition to the acquisition of knowledge. Part of Augustine's

76. "cum et amicitia, nisi aliquid credatur, quod certa ratione demonstrari non potest, omnino nulla sit" (*util. cred.* 10.24; CSEL 25/1.30).

77. *util. cred.* 10.23.

early attraction to the Manichees had been their boast that they could prove dogmas without having first to accept them on authority.[78] The Catholic position was just the opposite. Ambrose preached belief first. Only after prayer, study, and the illumination brought through the sacraments, could the disciple hope to find his intelligence illumined by divine grace.[79] And on the natural level, certainly in the sequence of time, this is not hard to see. We learn language from our parents, letters from our teachers, and the rules that govern the state of nature from our older brothers and sisters. In any intellectual discipline we first are taught the principles of the science and only later can we independently test these for ourselves. Even the existence of other people's minds can only be inferred from its effects, in other words, known by a natural act of belief.[80] Of course, we can sometimes be deceived. Parents can teach bad grammar; science has its revolutions; schoolteachers occasionally swear that some nasty student truly is missing a brain. But Augustine's moral claim is that, unless there is strong evidence to the contrary, human beings have an obligation to believe one another, and to trust in the testimony of credible authorities. Inasmuch as this moral rule is ignored, so Augustine warns, society will crumble as the bonds of friendship binding people together crack and split apart, like ice over a lake in spring.

All things being equal, then, we have a moral duty to presume the truthfulness of human witnesses. From authority in general Augustine turns to the authority of the Bible in particular. Augustine thinks that any open-minded seeker de facto has a credible reason to believe what the Gospels say about the Son of God. Why? Like

78. *conf.* 4.5.7. See further Alan Satterlee, *Ambrose of Milan's Method of Mystagogical Preaching* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2002), 185–90.

79. Cf. *conf.* 5.14.24, and Carol Harrison, *Christian Truth and Fractured Humanity,* 49.

80. *lib. arb.* 2.2.14.

other credible accounts, these testimonies were written by witnesses.[81] In like fashion, the nations' belief in Christ is harnessed as evidence for a version of this same moral argument. That the identical Gospel is believed throughout the world, is proclaimed by the one Church, and instructs people in the worship of the same God, is not an absolute proof, but it does provide credible reason to believe in the veracity of Christian revelation.[82] Beyond this hermeneutical precept there is an epistemological advantage. Simply, where faith precedes understanding, one has the opportunity to travel farther. Accepting certain beliefs as though they were true, psychologically speaking, allows us to go further in our thinking than if we had refused to believe them in the first place. This is true in Latin as in mathematics, in chemistry as in music. Before you can get to Cicero you have to accept all the declensions. Before there can be understanding, there is belief.

Does any of the above render Augustine a fideist? That all depends upon what we mean by the term. Since my purpose here is not primarily apologetics, I only offer this clarification. If by fideism we mean the modest and pliable sense of the doctrine that "knowledge depends on faith or revelation" (OED), then to some extent Augustine is a fideist; and there is plenty of room to debate Augustine's teaching on illumination, his teaching on semiotics, and the way that he moves the Platonic ideas into the mind of God.[83] But if by this charge we imply also the second half of the definition, "and reason or the intellect is to be disregarded," then we can be sure that we have begun to swing at shadows. I suspect that given our culture's present anti-intellectualism, and its pervasive mistrust of tradition, naming Augustine a fideist does more to obscure than it would to clarify how his epistemology relates to and depends upon his moral theory.

81. *lib. arb.* 2.2.15.
82. *vera relig.* 3.4.
83. *div. qu.* 46.2.

Beyond the charge of fideism, any thoughtful critique of Augustine's high view of authority would need also to bear in mind the positive function that reason, and dialectic in particular, plays in his system. One contemporary discussion of Augustine's contribution to medieval education summarizes the relation between authority and dialectic this way:

> Since on the Augustinian conception the movement of enquiry is towards first principles, dialectic is necessarily its argumentative instrument. But since dialectic argues from premises so far agreed, or at least not put in question, to conclusions which are not necessary truths but only the most compelling conclusion to be arrived at so far, the work of dialectic always has an essentially uncompleted and provisional character. A dialectical conclusion is always open to further challenge.[84]

The above rightly emphasizes how the conclusions of a dialectical enquiry, in an Augustinian account of teaching and learning, are open to development. Where does this leave our Kantian objection with which we began? What reply could an Augustinian make to Dewey's disciples and to those who emphasize the good of autonomy? Well, an Augustinian can say that they are partially right. Though it must be judged against the larger background of his moral theology, for Augustine independent discovery is a primary goal of philosophical and theological education: faith or belief retains only a provisional value as a stage along one's path to God. A Kantian is correct to insist that it is better to see for oneself the truth of the moral law; but on Augustine's view, so at least I have tried to argue, we would be wrong to imagine that, in this life, our need for authority can ever be completely displaced.

Conclusion

Augustine's writing on pedagogy reveals much about the purposes for liberal education. In vindicating the centrality of author-

84. MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition,* 88–89.

ity, both human and divine, we have also uncovered, in addition to the aim of happiness, immediate and proximate purposes for education. First in the order of time Augustine wishes his students to acquire the intellectual and moral virtues they need for the search for truth through the liberal disciplines. Through studying both the action and argument of several of Augustine's early dialogues we have seen that students must, of course, master dialectic; but more than this, we have uncovered the specifically educational reasons for why Augustine also encourages humility, moderation, and like virtues in his students. These are not peripheral to education, but essential to his view of right method. Furthermore, in contrast to Kant, Augustine seeks to fulfill what we have named the proximate purposes of education. This is his student's enculturation into an intellectual community and a spiritual tradition whose distinctive dogma, the Resurrection of Christ, can only be believed by faith in the authority of the historical sources upon which that claim partially rests.

Having articulated the purposes of education we turn in our penultimate chapter to Augustine's defense of that theory. While authority is certainly embodied, externally, in the teacher and in the community, our account would be incomplete without explaining how Augustine recognizes also a series of "interior" authorities that are relevant to education, which include Christ himself.

CHAPTER 6

Authority and Illumination

IN WHAT WAYS are the purposes for liberal education made manifest in Augustine's other discussions of epistemology and ethics? Having situated Augustine's educational thought within the context of his moral theology (chapter 2), having examined his critique of skepticism (chapter 3), and having explored how the purposes of liberal education are manifest in his treatment of the curriculum (chapter 4) and within his account of pedagogy (chapter 5), we turn next to examine how features of Augustine's epistemology and ethics corroborate the view of education for which we have thus far argued.

Augustine's early work on epistemology is experimental. Scholars have identified at least three groups of texts that support three interpretations for Augustine's account of the mind's perspicacity. In the first, the soul itself is the ground of intelligibles (*sol.* 2.18.32–19.33; *imm. an.* 1.1–6.11); in the second, like Plato and Cicero, learning is recollection (*quan.* 20.34; cf. *Tusc.* 1.58, and *Meno* 98A); in the third, the mind knows by the illumination of the light of God (*mag.* 11.38).[1] Within this third account Augustine suggests several

1. Cf. TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian,* who also provides a helpful summary of the four main interpretations of Augustine's theory of illumination since the Middle Ages (which he names the Avicennan, the ontologist, the Thomist, and the Bonaventuran), 103–7.

ways that Christ acts as the mediating principle of knowledge in the mind. Augustine's discussion takes up Plato's theory that learning is actually recollection, recovering knowledge by oneself that is in oneself (*Meno* 85D). After a detailed examination of the nature of signs, Augustine incorporates this claim in his *De magistro* to conclude, similarly, that "we learn nothing by these signs called words" (*mag.* 10.34).[2] Although we come to *believe* some important things through signs—as, in history—words alone can never lead us to *knowledge*. Learning through teachers is, thus, only apparent. *Foris admonet, intus docet*: when the soul gains knowledge it does so not through consulting external authorities but the inner teacher that is Christ.[3] It is Christ, as the unchangeable power and wisdom of God, whom "every rational soul consults" *(omnis rationalis anima consulit)*.[4]

Pertinent to his theory of liberal education, Augustine suggests another, less known account, of how Christ illuminates the mind. In his *Epistula* 12 to Nebridius Augustine identifies Christ as the *disciplina dei,* the discipline of God. In other texts in this period *disciplina* has no univocal signification. Rather, it designates a plurality of related concepts and objects. It is used, for instance, to identify the liberal arts and the law of God. Because *disciplina* as law of God can be in the mind, the concept also shares associations with *conscientia,* the mind's inner capacity for moral judgment. Since elsewhere Augustine says that it is by *disciplina* that we have knowledge in the soul (see below), I suggest that Augustine's title for Christ as the *disciplina dei* opens up an additional avenue for exploring how Christ illuminates the mind and how the purposes of liberal education are manifest even in his theory of knowledge.

Thus this chapter argues that understanding Christ as the *disciplina* of God suggests how the ideal of independent discovery

2. "per ea signa, quae verba appellantur, nos nihil discere" (CSEL 77.44–45).
3. Cf. *mag.* 14.46.
4. *mag.* 11.38; CSEL 77.47.

relates to authority. Even more, the term goes some distance in justifying Augustine's confidence in the capacity of the arts to achieve the purposes he hopes they can fulfill: Christ is the *final cause* of the mind's illumination and causes knowledge to arise in the soul by the mediation of authorities, internal and external. When speaking of, say, conscience as an internal authority, I mean simply that conscience becomes for Augustine a principle to which reason must attend. Admittedly, here our conclusions are least certain. We are focusing on a period of texts where Augustine's ideas are developing quickly. Nevertheless, in extending the argument we made in the last chapter, I suggest that a variety of sources of authority can be interpreted as modes through which Christ, as the *disciplina dei,* illuminates the mind. If this is correct, then we will have found one way of drawing together Augustine's reflections on the necessary place of authority in education with what is elsewhere a more Platonic emphasis on the solitary nature of learning.[5] To do this I explore how *conscientia* and *lex aeterna,* as sources of authority, make unique claims upon, and thereby transform, the character of reason as it operates within the process of education; along the way I show how Augustine's understanding of multiple mediating avenues of truth, rooted in creation, are a direct response to Manichean dualism; lastly, I reflect on Augustine's *Epistula* 12 to Nebridius and show how these scattered comments on illumination bear directly upon his theory of the liberal arts.

Auctoritas and *Conscientia*

Reason is a muscle that needs to be exercised in relation to concrete authorities, two of which are prominent in his early investi-

5. On this topic, see Goulven Madec's perceptive comments on the way that Christ enlightens the mind inwardly through the help of external symbols in *Saint Augustin et la philosophie: Notes critiques* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1996), 53–60.

gations. In order to understand the relation between Augustine's pedagogical thought and his theory of knowledge we extend our discussion of authority to see how it applies in specific contexts. We begin first with *conscientia.* For Augustine conscience acts as an authority which *ratio* must take into account in its ascent.

According to Augustine, the act of conscience is an act of judgment. Augustine both relies upon and develops further the two primary meanings of "conscience" that were present in Christian and pagan sources. In the ancient world the most basic denotation of *syneidesis* (in Greek) and *conscientia* (in Latin) is "consciousness," in the sense of a shared understanding either with oneself or with another's mind.[6] Thus, when Menander spoke of conscience as "a god to all of us" he had in view not a legislative deity but an avenging one.[7] For the poet, *syneidesis* speaks a voice of accusation; conscience is that within our minds that bears witness to wrong deeds, to bad faith.[8] St. Paul's own use of the term ensured that the Christian moral imagination, including St. Augustine's, would ever be bound to this notion.[9] The two extended passages where St. Paul

6. See Claude A. Pierce's discussion of the Hellenistic background to the New Testament use of *syneidesis* in *Conscience in the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1955), 21–28. On the difference between the Latin *conscientia* and the corresponding Greek usage, Maurer notes: "The idea of knowing together with other men is sustained much more strongly and consistently than in Greek, whether in the sense of a confidence or of guilty conspiracy. In relation to one's own person self-consciousness or self-awareness is to the fore, so that we often find an obj. Gen.: *conscientia virtutis et vititiorum,* 'awareness of virtues and vices.' The moral aspect is only secondary. Here consciousness becomes conscience." See Christian Maurer's article "Sunoida," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,* ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1971), especially at 907.

7. *Monost.* 654.

8. Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1994), 115.

9. Even though its subsequent history would have a long evolution within moral theology up to the present day. See Oliver O'Donovan's discussion of the

uses the term both concern food sacrificed to idols (1 Cor. 8:1–11.1 and Rom. 14). In these texts the Apostle exhorts mature Christians to treat less mature believers with deference, so that their actions might not be an occasion for another's sin. In the first text, in particular, St. Paul warns the spiritual Christian not to use his liberty in ways that could *wound* the consciences of others. The scrupulous conscience of the weak is distressed because of the idolatrous activity of the strong. Though there is no God but the Lord, eating food that has been sacrificed to idols may yet communicate the wrong message to the weaker brother. Seeing a stronger eat sacrificed food, the weaker might be led to do the same, but with the wrong intent. This is precisely what St. Paul wishes to avoid. In its place he recommends self-denial by some as an expression of love for others. Here then, as in the classical sense, we have conscience as "consciousness," a self-recognition of one's own intention. In the case of the weaker brother, right intention is necessary to right action. The Apostle is keen to guard the innocence of the weaker brother's mind even when that means, on occasion, showing deference to superstition.

There is a further sense of the term. The opening of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans is an extended reflection on the way that the righteousness of God has been made known to and offended by all, Jews and Gentiles alike. In his effort to show that all peoples stand condemned by the Law, and hence have need of the reconciliation offered through Christ's atoning sacrifice, St. Paul must first show that Gentiles, being without the Torah, yet have some access to God's purposes for creation, which they have ignored. St. Paul then appeals to conscience. It is the Gentile's conscience that *witnesses to* the unwritten law of God. This law is accessible inwardly through the knowledge of their hearts. Conscience in this second sense bears witness to a law whose origin lies outside of human sub-

history of the idea of conscience in *Resurrection and Moral Order,* 114–20, and John Paul II's 1993 encyclical *Veritatis Splendor,* paras. 54–70.

jectivity. Here, then, are two denotations of *conscientia* transmitted through the New Testament: conscience as "consciousness" of the *relative* significance of one's actions, and conscience as that which bears witness to an *objective* order of law. Augustine will take up both of these senses of *conscientia* and develop a third.

Conscientia becomes an important concept during two intensely polemical periods of Augustine's writing. Ignoring the term at Cassiciacum altogether, he picks it up twelve times between 387 and 389, primarily against the Manichees. During the 390s the term once more falls into relative disuse and again is taken up between 401 and 406, this time to serve his purposes against the Donatists.[10] From his early period I wish to draw attention to three progressively specific applications of *conscientia* (1) as consciousness of the relative significance of one's actions, (2) as consciousness of objective law, and (3) as the site of God's presence in the mind. The first two have a clear correspondence with the New Testament texts surveyed, the third is an original contribution. My aim is to show how Augustine's third use of the term implies that Christ's presence acts through the authority of conscience.

Augustine uses *conscientia* similarly to the way that classical authors employed the term as equivalent to consciousness. The experience of a group consciousness grounds the possibility for common judgment. We find a clear example of this use at the close of his appeal to the Manicheans in the *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* (A.D. 388).[11] At the close of his remarks he makes appeal to their

10. "Das Fehlen der Termini in den zu Cassiciacum entstandenen Schriften, aber auch in zahlreichen anderen Werken überrascht nicht. Allein schon an der Häufung von c[onscientia] in der 387–389 abgefaßten Schrift *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum*—12mal, davon 9Bibelzitate—wird die Bedeutung des Terminus für das moraltheologische, apologetische und bibelexegetische Denken A.s deutlich" (cols. 1221–22); cf. Cornelius Mayer's article "Conscientia" in AugLex.

11. As Augustine outlines in his introduction, the purpose of this work is to

conscience. Augustine asks the Manichees to consider the disparity that lies between what the initiate is told about their practices and what the initiate will find once he enters into their fellowship:

> But when your conscience will know [*nouerit uestra conscientia*] that those whom you bring into your sect, when they come into a more intimate acquaintance with you, will find many things in you which nobody hearing you accuse others would suspect, is it not great impertinence to demand perfection in the weaker Catholics, to turn away the inexperienced from the Catholic Church, while you show nothing of the kind in yourself to those thus turned away?[12]

To win over his readers, notice how Augustine weaves together both aspects of *conscientia* (as consciousness and as witness to moral order) that we found in the New Testament. The success of Augustine's argument depends upon two assumptions he has of his former coreligionists: that through conscience they will be able to see the same incongruity between the projected image and the actual condition of their community that Augustine sees; and that through conscience the Manichees will be able to see the same principle of equality as parity that they have violated in their estimation of the

convince Manichees of the veracity of Catholic doctrine concerning the final end of human life (*mor.* 1.1.1.). He specifies, moreover, that his intention is not to conquer his opponents but to cure them of their errors so that he might win them over to the true Christian community (*mor.* 1.1.1.). Augustine's charitable intention manifests itself in two ways: in his method of beginning with reason alone, and in his refrain from speaking to any other than New Testament passages (Manichees disregarded the authority of the Old Testament). These limitations are severe. As Augustine tells his readers he would prefer to start with authority. But so that they might set out from common methodological presuppositions he agrees to begin, not from distinctively Catholic teaching, but with a rational investigation of the nature of happiness (*mor.* 1.2.3). Through the ensuing discourse on the *summum bonum* (*mor.* 1.5.7), the place of the virtues (*mor.* 1.15.25), the nature of scriptural authority (*mor.* 1.29.59), and the witness of Catholic piety (*mor.* 1.32.69), Augustine draws his readers step by step to consider the reasonableness of the Catholic position.

12. "Cum uero nouerit uestra conscientia eos quos in sectam uestram introducitis, cum uobis familiarius iungi coeperint, multa inuenturos quae in uobis esse, cum alios accusaretis, nemo suspicabitur" (*mor.* 1.35.80; CSEL 30.68).

Catholic faithful. Conscience thus both *judges* whether a disparity exists (between actions and principles) and, more fundamentally, *bears witness to* universal principles (according to which such judgments can be made).

Conscience as Source of Authority

Augustine's treatment of conscience includes an innovative development. Extending beyond the New Testament passages discussed above, though not incongruent with them, Augustine more controversially identifies conscience with rationality itself. While beyond our period, it will be useful to glance at a few texts written just after ordination as a means of filling in our understanding of his developing views on authority and illumination. Thus, in his early exegesis of the Lord's Sermon on the Mount Augustine implies that conscience is a constituent feature of both human and angelic rational nature (*s. Dom. mon.* 2.9.32). Appealing to Romans 2:14–16, he argues that, however depraved it may be, so long as the soul has the ability to reason God can still speak to it. The syllogism runs as follows. God speaks through conscience; every rational soul has a conscience; God speaks, therefore, to every rational soul.[13]

This includes the devil. The immediate exegetical context of his appeal to conscience in *De sermone Domini in monte* 2.9.32 is his exposition of the sixth petition of Christ, *et ne inducas nos in tentationem* (Matt. 6:13). Readers will wonder—Augustine anticipates—how a Catholic exegete can admit that God "tempts" people? (As he points out, some biblical texts, such as Deut. 13:3, imply directly that God tempts us, and worse, that Satan actually converses with

13. "For when will they be able to understand that there is no soul, however perverse, which can yet reason in any way, in whose conscience God is not speaking?" (Nam quando illi ualent intellegere nullam esse animam quamuis peruersam, quae tamen ullo modo ratiocinari potest, in cuius conscientia non loquatur deus?) (*s. Dom. mon.* 2.9.32; CSEL 35.122).

God, as in the case of Job.) Augustine replies, on the one hand, that God tests some as a means of punishment, on the other hand, that whenever God tests the righteous it is not to teach him anything but rather to tell us about ourselves.[14] Thus, when the Scripture says, "The Lord your God tempts you, so that he would know if you love him" (Deut. 13:3), it literally means so that *you* might know if *you* love him. God tests a person so that he might become known to himself *(ut ipse sibi notus fieret)*. God allows the righteous to suffer as a means of drawing them into a closer union. Augustine tries to vindicate God's action by pointing to the psychological benefits that many gain from such trials. For one thing, the more we love God the less likely we are to despair.[15]

This exegetical context is relevant because it helps us to see the way that Augustine is developing the concept *conscientia* in new directions. Whereas St. Paul in Romans 2 draws upon conscience to establish the principle of equity *outward* to include Jews and Gentiles together (St. Paul thinks both bear a similar responsibility before the law of God), Augustine—in an unexpected move—uses conscience to establish the principle of equality *upward* (in terms of reason) to include ourselves and angels as creatures that share in the capacity to hear the voice of God in our minds.[16] Through trials we gain self-knowledge. Conscience is linked with our identity as rational agents. Conscience becomes a window through which

14. *s. Dom. mon.* 2.9.32–34.

15. Literally, when a person discovers his love for God he gains power to condemn his own despair (suamque desperationem condemnaret) (*s. Dom. mon.* 2.9.31; CCSL 35.120).

16. God allows temptations to happen, but the devil is the transitive cause of their occasion. Temptations take place by means of Satan because of the Lord's permission (cf. 2.9.34). Appealing to Romans 2, Augustine argues that the devil—like every rational creature—knows the truth by the light of God's illumination. God may be said to tempt or prove human beings either to punish men for sins or examine them so that they may know their character as God knows their character (2.9.31).

God can be discovered and our true identity found. What is more, Augustine's account implies that the object of our love is sometimes hidden from us. God tests us to allow us to prove our love. This is for our benefit. In this Augustine straightforwardly accepts St. Paul's teaching that conscience can both accuse and excuse.

Peeling off another layer, and allowing more light to fall on the question of conscience's inviolability, Augustine recognizes that conscience requires cultivation. The Augustinian teaching on conscience, exalted though it may be, faces squarely our capacity for self-deception. We can falsely perceive our standing before God: to overcome this epistemological gap God allows some to suffer temptation. The intended purpose for this suffering is, as we have already discussed, that we might cast off despair—so that we can put aside the uninformed judgment we have made of ourselves.[17] The obliqueness of our self-knowledge is treated in another text, written prior to his *De sermone Domini in monte*, in his first commentary on the Psalms.

Augustine's first use of the term in his writings on the Psalms comes in 392, with his commentary on Psalm 5.[18] Verse 10–11 reads: "Lead me Lord in your justice, because of my enemies; direct my

17. *s. Dom. mon.* 2.9.31.

18. Augustine refers to *conscientia* in a number of other discussions on the Psalms, for example, at 7.4, 9 (= chapter 7, verses 6 and 10), 9.9, 23 (= 9:8–9 and 9:5), and 10.3, 5 (= 10:3), etc., which add corroborating evidence to the interpretation argued above. Thus, in his commentary on Psalm 7, verse 6, Augustine employs sense 3 (conscience as figurative place of meeting with God): conscience is the secret location where God alone tests a person (*ubi solus Deus hominem probat*). Further, echoing Romans 2:15 Augustine refers to sense 2 (conscience as witness) in his exegesis of Psalm 9:9, as he writes, the Lord will judge in equity and justice, while conscience bears witness (*testimonium perhibente conscientia*). Finally, Augustine plausibly evokes both sense 1 (*conscience as judgment*) and sense 3 in his comment on Psalm 9:5 when he writes that the wicked—i.e., those with bad consciences (*animus autem male sibi conscius*)—are those for whom awareness of God has been blotted out.

path in your sight" *(Domine, deduc me in tua iustitia propter inimicos meos. Dirige in conspectu tuo iter meum)*.[19] Augustine picks up the contrast between a physical journey and an interior movement, whose progress can only be recognized by noncorporeal vision. The journey the Lord directs is the movement of the "affectibus animorum," the affections of the soul. Conscience is limited. To discover this true judgment about ourselves Augustine says we ought to flee into conscience, which is to flee into the sight of God *(ad conscientiam et ad Dei conspectum confugendum est)*.[20] The verb *confugio* here denotes both that this inner meeting place between God and man, in conscience, is a place of refuge and not always inhabited. We must will to go there. Our attention must be turned and recalled if this meeting is to take place. Here *conscientia* is not a faculty, but a metaphorical place of meeting. One man cannot peer into the conscience of another because human judgment, unlike divine scrutiny, is distorted by iniquity, and is therefore unclear.[21] Furthermore, it is to an interior place that we venture to by an act of recollection. It is in turning to reflect upon the mind's *conscientia* that we meet with God so as to share with God a true judgment about ourselves. Once we turn, whom do we meet?

Conscience as the Illumination of Christ

We can draw both an epistemological and a metaphysical consequence from the above texts. Conscience as an aspect of reason becomes for Augustine the locus of the presence of God accessed through the mind even while being above the mind. Like Plato,

19. CSEL 93/1a. 114–15; cf. *conf.* 7.10.16.

20. CSEL 93/1a. 116.

21. Famously, in book 19.21 of *civ. Dei,* Augustine suggests that some epistemological failures are due to tragedy; the judge, through no fault of his own, simply cannot see into the mind of the accused and so must make decisions which sometimes are later shown to be false. One of the marks of heaven is that each person will be able to see every other person's thought.

Augustine thinks that knowledge involves illumination of the mind by the good; things can only be truly known in the light of the eternal reasons that are in God's mind (cf. *div. qu.* 46). God's illumination is present whenever a creature reasons correctly, and conscience specifies the part of the mind through which Christ informs us about the good *to be done* in action (*mag.* 11.38). It is helpful to remember how this is distinct from the then leading Platonic account of interiority of Plotinus. Augustine's so-called inward turn requires a double movement, first up, then in. Philip Cary contrasts Augustine's interior ascent to the divine with Plotinus's by pointing out how the inner space of the Augustinian soul "is not divine but is beneath God, so that turning into the inside is not all there is to finding God."[22] Looking forward, while Augustine eventually came to embrace a doctrine of deification, against Neoplatonists he yet remained careful to safeguard the distinction between creator and creature.[23] The divine's presence in the soul never becomes a basis

22. With Plotinus (cf. *enn.* 5.2.1) it is difficult to judge in what relevant sense creation is distinct from the One. (For an attempted explanation, see Mark Edwards *Culture and Philosophy in the Age of Plotinus* [London: Duckworth, 2006], 68–70). According to Carey, the contrast between Augustine and Plotinus essentially rests on two different accounts of creation: "In contrast to Plotinus, the inner space of the Augustinian soul is not divine but is beneath God, so that turning into the inside is not all there is to finding God. We must not only turn inward but also look upward, because God is not only within the soul but also above it. In the interval between the turning in and looking up one finds oneself in a new place, never before conceived: an inner space proper to the soul, different from the intelligible world in the Mind of God. The soul becomes, as it were, its own dimension—a whole realm of being waiting to be entered and explored." See Carey, *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 39.

23. Although facile typologies between the East and West persist (e.g., that the East developed a rich doctrine of deification where the West reduces soteriology to justification by faith or to a rationalistic account of beatification—here Norman Russell cites Vladimir Lossky's *The Image and Likeness of God* [London: Mowbrays, 1975], 71–110, and *The Vision of God* [London: Faith Press, 1969], 9–20), it is certainly less true today than it was a generation ago that "Augustine's use of the concept of deification tends to be neglected by students of his theology"; see

for complete equality between God and man; nor does his teaching on the presence of God in the mind through conscience imply that our judgments attain an authority independent from Scripture or the Church. Of course, Augustine does not deliver (though we wish he had) a properly systematic account of the relationship between rationality in general and conscience in particular. In the two exegetical passages we have focused upon, Augustine leaves ample room for further reflection. Following on from his exegesis we might ask, for instance: If conscience provides access to unchanging principles of the moral law, does it also bear the capacity to hear new insights that are given by the Holy Spirit working in time? Under what conditions does conscience err?

Our concern has not been to provide an exhaustive description of *conscientia,* but merely to show that it is an authority, a compelling source or internal principle to which reason must attend in the development of its own powers. Conscience is compelling, as I have suggested, because it is Christ that acts through conscience to illuminate the mind. To the epistemological question, "Under what conditions does conscience err?" Augustine does provide some indications. We may claim that conscience has spoken *only* on those occasions that the mind perceives correctly: we say that God has illuminated the mind (and by extension the conscience) only when

---

Gerald Bonner, "Augustine's Conception of Deification," *Journal of Theological Studies* 37 (1986): 369–86, at 369. Augustine himself has a rich account of deification, and refers to the doctrine more frequently than any other Latin father. However, over against pagan Neoplatonists, and in a way more than Origen, Augustine only ever adopts a tightly qualified understanding of the way that the human participates in the divine. Commenting on Psalm 49.2, for instance, he writes: "If we have been made sons of God, we have also been made gods: but this is the effect of grace adopting not of nature generating" (*en. Ps.* 49.2); or at *civ. Dei* 22.30: "for it is one thing to be God, another thing to be a partaker of God. God by nature cannot sin, but the partaker of God receives this inability from God." These and other texts are cited and discussed in Norman Russell's *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 329–32.

reasoning yields understanding.[24] God illumines the mind, that is, only when we reason correctly. As we shall see, the mind's capacity to reason is attributed to the presence of *disciplina* in the soul. But if Christ illuminates the mind only when we reason correctly, what conditions must pertain for our judgments of conscience to be justified? In other words, what work does such a concept achieve, in a theory of knowledge, if the veracity of a claim can be established, indeed *must* be established or corroborated by additional grounds? At the least this puzzle points us to the certainty that conscience is not for Augustine a final court of appeal. It points us also to the way that conscience, as an interior authority through which Christ speaks, must be related to other sources of authority, other media through which God illuminates the soul.

Auctoritas and the *Lex aeterna*

Conscience serves as an internal principle of judgment or "authority." Next we turn to what we might call external authorities. In this and the next section we focus on law's pedagogical function, first through the eternal law, then through Christ's agency directly as the *disciplina* of God. Elucidating law's work in the development of reason in this way allows us to identify additional sources of authority which reason must take into account, thus further contradicting the notion of reason as wholly independent. Augustine is keen to vindicate the objectivity of law as it is present to the mind through creation. However, precisely in response to the Manichean denigration of nature, Augustine's most important early discussions of law (notably in *De libero arbitrio* book 1) are interwoven within a

24. "We ought not to attribute whatever in its reasoning is true to itself, but to the very light of truth by which, however faintly, it is illuminated according to its own capacity, so as to perceive some truth by reasoning" (quidquid in ea ratiocinatione uerum est non ei tribuendum est sed ipsi lumini ueritatis, a quo uel tenuiter pro sui capacitate inlustratur, ut uerum aliquid in ratiocinando sentiat) (*s. Dom. mon.* 2.9.32; CCL 35.122).

complex set of reflections about the ontological integrity of created natures, their mutability over time, their corruptibility by sin, and their potential restoration by grace.

Augustine's first and most important early treatment of law is found in book 1 of *De libero arbitrio.* At the close of *De quantitate animae* he had asserted that the soul receives its free will from God.[25] Now, only months later, he would attempt to justify that claim on the occasion of an extended discussion on the origin of evil. As Augustine later expressed it, he began the work in Rome as a layman and ended it as a priest.[26] Beginning the work over the winter of 387/388 he completed the last two books somewhere after 391 and before 395 or 396.[27] Scholars have elsewhere noted features of the dialogue that suggest a development in Augustine's thinking and a change in focus that is mirrored in the shifts of style and substance evident between the first and last two books. Augustine's discussion becomes more explicitly theological. This is illustrated, for instance, in the way that his engagement with Scripture increases in book 2 compared with book 1.[28] The change in tone was,

25. *quant.* 80.

26. As he says at *retr.* 1.9.1: "I completed the second and third books in Africa, then as I was able, as I was already ordained a Presbyter at Hippo Regius" (Quorum secundum et tertium in Africa, iam etiam Hippone Regio presbyter ordinatus, sicut tunc potui, terminaui) (CCL 57.23).

27. That is, when he sent the entire manuscript to Paulinus of Nola (cf. *ep.* 31.7). There is some debate over the date when the manuscript was completed. What is known is that Augustine stayed in Rome the winter of 387/388, returned to Africa in the summer of 388, and was ordained prior to Easter 391; for the relevant secondary literature as to whether Augustine completed the last two books in 395 or 396, see Simon Harrison, *Augustine's Way into the Will: The Theological and Philosophical Significance of* De Libero Arbitrio (Oxford: Oxford Unviersity Press, 2006), 17–20.

28. A detailed discussion, with a list of the scriptural texts cited in book 2, is given by B. Bardy in BA 6, pp. 497–99, who comments: "Le livre II rend déjà, si l'on peut dire, un son plus chrétien. Plus exactement l'Ecriture y est davantage mise en relief" (497).

I have no doubt, partly effected by Augustine's maturing grasp of Christian doctrine that grew out of his immersion in the Scripture after ordination. While these observations are helpful, they should not distract us from attending to the underling unity of the work; certainly they do not excuse us from reading the text on its own terms.[29] Augustine provides a terse summary of the subject and intention of the dialogue that we may take as the starting point for our discussion: he sought the origin of evil and a means by which to refute the Manichees who blame God as evil's cause.[30]

Book 1 asks what is the origin of evil and answers that it is human beings. As Augustine concludes: we commit evil out of the freedom of the will *(id facimus ex libero uoluntatis arbitrio)*.[31] In the next book Evodius asks whether free will should have been given to us. Augustine replies that, even given the horrible consequences that human freedom has inflicted, God was justified to create a world where such an outcome would be possible.[32] Finally, book 3 argues that God's knowledge of future contingents does not predestine every possible outcome; in other words, divine foreknowledge is compatible with genuine human freedom.[33] Most of Augustine's

29. Thus, although I shall argue that knowing the Manichean context (which at *retr.* 1.9.2 Augustine explicitly describes) helps us to understand the background to his discussion on the goodness of created natures, this background is not absolutely essential. Indeed, Augustine himself invokes the Manichees neither by name nor by citation, implying that he expects his arguments can stand up to scrutiny when judged as they are given on their own terms. See Harrison's defense on the thematic and philosophical integrity of the *lib. arb.* in *Augustine's Way into the Will,* 14–25.

30. *retr.* 1.9.2.

31. *lib. arb.* 1.16.117; CCL 29.235.

32. As Evodius states the question at the end of book 1: "But I ask whether free choice itself, by which we have the faculty of sinning, should have been given to us by the one who made us?" (Sed quaero utrum ipsum liberum arbitrium, quo peccandi facultatem habere conuincimur, oportuerit nobis dari ab eo qui nos fecit) (1.16.117; CCL 29.235).

33. Augustine summarizes Evodius's concerns and states what I take to be the

discussions of law, and the texts relevant to our inquiry, are found in the first book, and arise in the midst of his search for the correct definition of sin. He eventually discovers this to be the exaltation of temporal over eternal things.[34] Immediately prior to taking up law, however, Augustine and Evodius have agreed that everyone can know that they will their own happiness; and further, that willing your own happiness, while necessary, is not a sufficient condition for attaining it. Happiness depends also upon your willing it in the right way. To merit happiness you must possess a good will *(bona voluntas).*[35] In this distinction between willing the end of human happiness (which all people do) and willing the means (which many people do not), Augustine moves beyond purely formal considerations of human psychology to the relevant and correlating objects of aspiration which lie outside the will. In other words, the will, to be good, must not only *intend* to be rightly ordered. Intention must also be joined to a correct understanding.[36] In order to know the

primary question thus: "For certainly this is what moves you and you are amazed at this: how would these things not be contradictory and inconsistent: [1] that God has foreknowledge of all future things but [2] that we sin voluntarily, not by necessity" (Certe enim hoc te mouet et hoc miraris, quo modo non sint contraria et repugnantia, ut et deus praescius sit omnium futurorum et nos non necessitate, sed uoluntate peccemus) (3.3.21; CCL 29.277–278).

34. *lib. arb.* 1.16.115.

35. *lib. arb.* 1.13.95.

36. This qualifies O'Donovan's description of Augustine's early eudaemonism: "Augustine constantly had difficulty understanding how some men could fail to love God while they continued to desire the happy life. *In his early writing he experimented with the answer that all men do love God after a fashion* (*Sol.* I.1.2, *De serm. Dom. in mont.* II.14.48, cf. *Retr.* I.18.8) but abandoned this in favor of the view, presented in different forms, that the desire could be frustrated by moral weakness and unbelief. At the same time, as we have observed, he slowly withdrew from the absolute identification of God and the happy life, preferring to say that the happy life was lived "with God" and "in God," *thus allowing for a certain opacity between the two* which made the blindness of the unbeliever more comprehensible" (*The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine,* 181 n.53) (emphasis mine). That opacity is already present in Augustine's writings at 391. Augustine's initial answer

right order of our loves one must also understand the structure of eternal law *(aeterna lex).*

On Augustine's view, eternal law is not so much an object in the world as a principle of divine reason apprehended by the mind. Human reason participates in eternal law, but it does not generate it. Insofar as it is an immaterial object, it is the rule that establishes a harmonious relation *among* all objects. In contrast to custom or to human laws,[37] eternal law is immutable.[38] It determines the operations of every created thing.[39] Law, in other words, is one more authority with which reason must contend in its formation. We take up the law's eternity, and then its universality.[40]

Augustine defines the two laws in relation to a series of contrasts. Earthly laws and eternal laws correspond to two types of goods, two types of people, who look to two mutually exclusive destinies. Anticipating what will become the organizing motif of *De civitate Dei,* Augustine differentiates two classes of human beings according to the objects of their affections. What a person loves determines the character of his will, which in turn dictates the quality of his eternal life.[41] Even in this life the object of your love establishes which of the two laws you will be governed by. Temporal law governs our relations to goods belonging to this age; it does this chiefly for the benefit of the covetous, but also, and more generally, to the end of peace and human society *(pax et societas humana).*[42] In principle, temporal

---

to the question "Why do all men love God but fail to attain happiness?" is, in part, that they fail to grasp the proper relation between objects. Augustine constantly emphasises in *lib. arb.* that moral rectitude is one of the epistemic preconditions to knowledge of God; he did not have to wait long to discover this insight.

37. *lib. arb.* 1.6.48, *div. qu.* 31.1, *quant.* 36.80.

38. *lib. arb.* 1.5.33, *vera rel.* 31.58.

39. *lib. arb.* 3.23.239, *Gn. litt.* 9.17.32.

40. For reflections on the Ciceronian background to Augustine's discussion of law, see Guistave Comès, *La doctrine politique de Saint Augustin* (Paris: Plon, 1927), 119–28, and Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society,* 6–26.

41. *lib. arb.* 1.16.114.

42. *lib. arb.* 1.15.108; CCL 29.233.

law defends any good that is subject to decay. These include goods associated with the earthly body *(hoc corpus),* health, beauty, and the like; the good of freedom *(libertas)*—which Augustine defines negatively in this context as the freedom *from* human masters; and the goods of familial and political community. These later are the social preconditions that make possible the acquisition of honor *(laus)* and wealth *(pecunia)*. In short, temporal law maintains order by regulating the production and distribution of all those goods that can be possessed but not indefinitely retained.[43]

It is not as though Augustine holds earthly goods in contempt. (Here we should keep in mind Augustine's anti-Manichean polemic.) As he says, men should not despise the beauty of women simply because there are adulterers.[44] Rather, it is our use of these goods that can entangle. Loved as ends, even good things become unnatural "limbs of the soul" *(membra animi)*. When such "limbs" are severed, as they inevitably must be, the break deforms and enfeebles. Used as means, however, they become occasions for virtue.[45] Indeed, contrary to the Manichees, Augustine is eager to show how material objects, precisely as corruptible, are still goods in their own way. We shall say more of his vindication of created natures in a moment; for now the point is this: our need for law bespeaks our lack of learning. Temporal law witnesses to the way that we habitually love out of order. We seek happiness from things that inevitably change and thus invariably disappoint. And so Augustine will define sin as nothing other than neglecting eternal things out of deference to temporal ones.[46]

43. *lib. arb.* 1.15.111.

44. *lib. arb.* 1.15.113.

45. This is, I believe, the earliest appearance of this distinction between use and enjoyment (*uti/fruitio*), echoed elsewhere (e.g., *en. Ps.* 4.8 and *div. qu.* 83.30), and a motif that will become prominent in *De doctrina Christiana* 1, though one not destined to retain a place in his more mature reflection on the nature of love. See further O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine,* 24–29 and 137.

46. *lib. arb.* 1.16.116.

The contingent nature of legal customs contrast with the universality of the *lex aeterna.* The *lex aeterna* is universal in two senses: first, in that this law applies to all human beings and never fails to exact justice, and second, in that its rule extends even over nonrational creation. Positive laws can be unjust. Indeed, where human legislation ceases to reflect eternal law it ceases also to merit the title of law whatsoever. Human laws are limited in another way. Human law cannot, and should not, have as its object the punishment and denunciation of every possible crime. Some wrongs must await a future retribution. In an astute early set of reflections on the limits of human justice Augustine acknowledges the place within society for a legitimate distance between law and morality.[47] Augustine approves of Evodius's practical realism about the limits of human law. Over and against the absolute justice of God as expressed through the *lex aeterna,* the jurisdiction of human laws is circumscribed by limits arising out of natural human finitude:

> For this law [i.e., human law] takes up things to be sanctioned which are enough to bring peace among ignorant men, and insofar as their deeds can be ruled by human government [*quanta possunt per hominem regi*]. However, those faults have other fitting penalties from which it seems to me wisdom alone can liberate.[48]

47. Robert A. Markus argues that within two or three years of this first discussion on law, "Augustine's absolute rejection of any enactment not in accord with the eternal law is softened" (89). His exegesis of the short passage of *vera rel.* 31.58 to which he appeals is highly conjectural, to say the least; his judgment is based on the presence of a single conditional conjunction, by which Augustine asserts that the human judge will look to the eternal law *if* he is a good and wise man. The relevant text reads: "Conditor tamen legum temporalium, si uir bonus est et sapiens, illam ipsam consulit aeternam" (CCL 32.225); without drawing attention to the fact, Markus's translation adds italics: "the temporal legislator, *if he is a good and wise man,* will bear in mind that eternal law" (89). This text, at least, lends little support to Markus's claim that "there are two distinct realms, a natural order determined by its own law and an order shaped by wills" (91); see *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine,* rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 88–91.

48. "Ea enim uindicanda sibi haec adsumit, quae satis sint conciliandae paci

The law cannot punish every fault; neither can the penalties exacted from earthly juridical systems remove all guilt incurred. In this way the very limits of human law serve to direct our attention to an eschatological fulfillment of the purposes of justice that only an infinite lawgiver could satisfy.

Each law complements the other and together they comprise a common provision for human flourishing. Although *lex aeterna* is preeminent in Augustine's account by virtue of its superior perpetuity, durability, and applicability, when seen in relation to the whole economy of human salvation, the temporal law—insofar as it retains its character as an instantiation of divine justice—contributes something indispensable to human flourishing after the Fall. By God's design, the temporal law's pliability makes it adaptable to a plurality of contexts; and, because it is promulgated by visible human agencies, it is in a certain respect more easily known. On the other side, the limitations of human justice can point us also to our need for an eternal law whose justice will be fully enacted.[49] This limit redirects our longing to an eternal kingdom where complete justice will be realized and lasting happiness achieved.

Eternal law is universal in yet a second sense. Not only does its jurisdiction extend over all people and every action, its government extends even over nonhuman life.

Lex aeterna Known through Creation

If it is pedagogically important for reason to take into account the *lex aeterna* in its progress to God, this raises the following prob-

hominibus imperitis et quanta possunt per hominem regi. Illae uero culpae alias poenas aptas habent, a quibus sola mihi uidetur posse liberare sapientia" (*lib. arb.* 1.13.40; CCL 29.218–219).

49. In dialogue with the concept of *iustitia* in Cicero's *De re publica,* Augustine will come to claim that, insofar as a commonwealth is defined by a common agreement about justice, lacking justice (because lacking Christ as its ruler), Rome was never truly a commonwealth (*civ. Dei.* 2.21); cf. Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society,* 10–26.

lem: How and under what conditions do we come to know the substance of eternal law? Several of Augustine's other dialogues focus directly upon his theory of knowledge. In *De libero arbitrio* that theory is set to work before our eyes. Here it will claim our attention only insofar as it informs us about the means by which we come to know the precepts of eternal law through creation, first through the human mind as a species of God's rational creation, then through God's works in nonrational creation.

Book 1 begins with Evodius demanding to know whether God is the cause of evil. Almost immediately Augustine will, for sound reasons, reframe the question: before you can discover the cause of evil you must know what it is you are talking about. In order to know *unde malum*? you first need to answer *quid malum*? The discussion begins with a false start. Once Evodius accepts the suggestion that knowledge always comes through learning, and that learning is always of good things, the corollary appears to be that it is impossible to learn evil things whatsoever. Evodius, presumably not without some exasperation, asks: "Come already! Now that you have convinced me that we do not learn to do evil, please explain to me what is the cause of our evil doing?"[50] To this reasonable question Augustine at first only replies that he will lead him along the same path or sequence *(eo tecum agam ordine)* that he himself followed as a young man.[51] Augustine thus declines to offer a direct reply. Whether by impertinence or by sound judgment, Augustine has signaled to his student the central educational precept that will emerge and be expounded upon through the dialogue: knowledge of God depends upon the satisfaction of not only epistemological but also moral preconditions. Evodius is simply not prepared for the answer.

50. "Age iam, quoniam satis cogis, ut fatear non nos discere male facere, dic mihi unde male faciamus" (*lib. arb.* 1.2.10).

51. *lib. arb.* 1.2.11; CCL 29.213.

Augustine reminds his pupil of the prophet's words, "Unless you believe you will not understand" *(Nisi credideritis, non intellegetis)* (Is.7.9), which in this context means two things. To arrive at understanding, one must (a) be willing to accept on authority the dogmas of Christian belief, and then (b) be ready to appeal to these dogmas as they show themselves relevant to the present enquiry. Being a believer, Evodius agrees. Evodius voluntarily accepts the educational and epistemological principle that authority is prior to understanding. Given such a fine admission, as readers of Augustine's text we might wonder why, then, does the dialogue not end here? What more is to be done after Evodius has heard what will be, in essence, the conclusion of their discussion? I think the answer is that even though Augustine has delivered a précis of his final reply (namely, that God is the author of the harm that we suffer, though not of the evil that we do) Evodius has yet to understand *for himself* the reasons that lead to this solution. And without seeing the truth of those reasons, apart from independently grasping the veracity of the premises upon which Augustine infers his conclusion, Evodius's faith would neither grow into its *mature form* as understanding; nor would he have learned a *pattern of reasoning* that could guide him through later difficulties whose solutions follow a similar logical structure.[52] Both aspects are significant. By setting himself as a model, Augustine implies that faith which does not develop into understanding leaves the believer prey to the same ill consequences that he himself suffered from: susceptibility to heretics, spiritual exhaustion, and despair.[53] Moreover, throughout the dialogue questions build upon one another. Like stepping up into a previously unexplored turret, Evodius's curiosity will lead him on to novel

52. I am here extending the discussion framed by Simon Harrison at the beginning of his chapter "Understanding, Knowledge, and Responsibility," in Harrison's *Augustine's Way into the Will,* 81–89.

53. *lib. arb.* 1.2.10; *conf.* 7.

problems he could not have originally anticipated.[54] The pedagogy of book 1 prepares him to grasp the conclusions offered in book 3.

That is enough by way of methodological observations. Putting this method into practice Augustine asks Evodius to try to define what evil is. Evodius offers examples of vice: adultery, murder, impiety. Taking up adultery Augustine presses his question: What is the evil of adultery? The violations of law, the principle of reciprocity, and custom are each considered and, in turn, rejected as inadequate explanations. Adultery is not wrong because it is prohibited; it is prohibited *because* it is wrong. Indeed not all people would prohibit adultery; there exist depraved persons who would willingly trade their own for another's wife. Common opinion can sometimes err. Augustine reminds Evodius that they are now seeking to *understand* their faith, not simply to locate an exterior authority that confirms it. Though law is an external principle, its harmony with human nature and reason must be understood. Some more fundamental explanation must be sought.[55]

54. How the sequence of topics discussed falls within the structure of the whole of *de libero arbitrio* is ably set out by Harrison in *Augustine's Way into the Will,* 50–54.

55. *lib. arb.* 1.3.14–19. Augustine's formulation of the *aeterna lex* underwent an evolution. His early considerations, beginning with the *de ordine* and expanded upon in *de libero arbitrio,* all point to the *rational* character of divine law, as I have tried to stress above. Later, he emphasizes the volitional character of law. What has often been taken as the authoritative Augustinian definition of eternal law is a line given in *Conta Faustum manichaeum* 22.27 (A.D. 400) where he writes: "Eternal law is, then, divine reason or the will of God, commanding natural order to be conserved, and prohibiting natural order to be disturbed" (Lex vero aeterna est ratio divina vel voluntas Dei, ordinem naturalem conservari iubens, perturbari vetans) (CSEL 25.621). Here the rational and volitional aspects of divine law are explicitly joined. The balance seems to tip, however, even a few years later where, for example, in his statement in *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 36 *sermo* 3.5 (CCL 38.371) will becomes the predominant category: "The will of God itself is the law of God" (voluntas Dei ipsa est lex Dei). A more definite break with what we might call the natural law tradition seems to come after 411 with Augustine's reaction to Pelagianism, as evident in works such as *De Spiritu et littera* (A.D. 412). For a good

Augustine's answer is to locate the source of evil not in any of the external features of the act but in the will's malformed intention.[56] Adultery is evil inasmuch as an adulterous act is always occasioned by an inordinate desire *(libido).* Quite simply, the evil in adultery is lust. This approach initially appears credible for two reasons. For one thing, it accommodates to the scriptural teaching that a person can be culpable of evil without acting upon that wicked intent (*lib. arb.* 3.8.20; Mt. 5:28)—as when one is said to fornicate the

sketch of the relation between reason and will in Augustine's developing understanding of law, see Vernon J. Bourke, "Voluntarism in Augustine's Ethico-Legal Thought," AugStud 1 (1970): 3–17, Joseph Koterski, "St. Augustine and the Moral Law," AugStud 11 (1980): 65–77, and Anton-Hermann Chroust, "The Philosophy of Law of St. Augustine," *Philosophical Review* 53, no. 2 (March 1944): 195–202. On the significance of this shift, and contending that it is possible to reconcile features of the two views in Augustine, Bourke comments: "Quite properly one might ask why it is important to determine whether Augustine ever taught that eternal law originates in God's will. Is not the divine will identical with the divine mind, and with God's very substance? To this question one would have to reply that Augustine always maintained that man comes to know the invisible things of God through prior knowledge of the things that God has made." And, in relation to the history of post-Augustinian voluntarism: "It would be very difficult to demonstrate that St. Augustine was a nominalist" (15–16).

56. In turning to Augustine's way into the *lex aeterna,* however, it is important to realize that even at this time he considered scriptural revelation the primary source for our understanding of moral norms. Though scriptural data can be puzzling, it remains the work of Christian moral reflection to attempt to understand how particular statements given in the Bible should be interpreted and applied (cf. *Gn. adv. Man.* 2.4.5–2.5.6; and later, *Gn. litt.* 2.9). All of this, of course, is in addition to drawing heavily upon classical philosophical ethics. In his later thinking Augustine makes clear that we know lying is always wrong because it is forbidden in the Scriptures (*mend.* 15.26; *c. mend.* 15.32–17.34). But, whereas the prohibition against killing has numerous exceptions in the Bible (cf. ep. 138), at no place do the Scriptures condone falsehood (cf. *c. mend.* 12.26). Thus, although Augustine came to rely heavily and primarily upon scriptural authority for the most reliable and direct source for our understanding of moral precepts, he also affirmed the need of orthodox biblical interpreters (*tractatores*) to resolve "such difficulties within the biblical texts as their metaphorical language and apparent textual inconsistencies"; see Dodaro, "Ethics," in AE, 328.

moment your will consents to delight in the idea of fornication. In addition, when Evodius and Augustine turn to the example of killing, it appears impossible to specify the evil of an act by its external features alone. Soldiers do no wrong when they execute justice by the sword.[57] But the same weapon used against a civilian becomes the instrument of murder. Thus far in the argument adultery, and evil acts more generally, appears to be specified in relation to the subject's internal disposition. As he tells his student, "so long as you will look for the evil in the visible act, you are bound to encounter difficulties."[58] Hence, our preliminary conclusion is that the discovery of the *lex aeterna* depends upon an analysis of the psychology of action.

But we soon learn that it depends not only upon the analysis of intention. Discovering the law of God requires also the right classification of things in the world that potentially serve as objects of aspiration. After the above sequence Augustine turns from the analysis of action to the classification of objects. We learn that

57. Augustine consistently affirms this teaching, as for instance, in his *ep.* 138 to Marcellinus (A.D. 412), which anticipates themes developed in *civ. Dei.* (cf. Lancel, *Augustine,* 395). Marcellinus asks how Augustine would rebut the charge that Christian teaching is incompatible with the conditions and dispositions required of citizens for the maintenance and defense of the Roman Empire. Can soldiers defend the state without rendering evil for evil? Yes they can. Christ's teaching to turn the other cheek (Mt. 5:59–41) signifies not a literal but a figurative commandment. His precepts refer rather to the interior disposition of the heart than to the act which appears exteriorly. Acts of judgment can be loving when it is for a sinner's correction; when such punishments are required we are to preserve patience and loving feelings in the hidden places of the soul. On this basis Augustine attempts to shape a reasonably consistent theory of just war (on this see also *ep.* 189) that is congruent with the New Testament by sharply distinguishing between act and intent; cf. O'Donovan, *The Just War Revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), and William R. Stevenson Jr., *Christian Love and Just War: Moral Paradox and Political Life in St. Augustine and His Modern Interpreters* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1987), especially 104–13.

58. "sed dum tu…quod iam uideri potest, malum quaeris, pateris angustias" (*lib. arb.* 1.3.20; CCL 29.215).

human desire may be ordered to goods that are either temporal or eternal. We learn, further, that eternal goods are to be loved above those that can change. This leads us back to our earlier discussion on the division of the two laws, and forward to what will become the familiar Augustinian motif of the *ordo amoris.* Learning to be good is learning to match the order of one's loves according to the objective scale of goods. On that scale there is no higher than God; hence, God is to be loved above all other goods.[59] Contemplating the conditions that make possible human judgment forms another approach to finding God through reflection upon the powers of the mind. And, any classification of external objects depends upon the mind's power of *judgment.* As we discover from a close reading of the dialogue, Augustine's discussion of judgment is, in fact, embedded within a larger reflection on our knowledge of God.

This brings us to Augustine's famous proof for God's existence in *De libero arbitrio* 2.3.7–2.15.40. Book 2 asks whether God is not responsible for evil since he gave humanity the capacity to do evil (2.1.1). In order to answer this Augustine leads his pupil through a sequence of demonstrations: first, that God exists; second, that all good things must come from Him; finally, that free choice is among those goods. All three claims are premises in turn used to support Augustine's general conclusion that God is responsible for creating the will (which is a good) but that we alone are responsible for the wicked *use* of the will.[60] The first of these demonstrations, of God's existence, occupies over half of book 2. Though sometimes passed over, this structural feature of the dialogue raises a puzzle worth noting. Recall that Evodius has no doubt as to God's exis-

59. *conf.* 7.13.19.

60. I have benefited from Harrison's outline of the structure of book 2; see *Augustine's Way into the Will,* 50–53. For a general outline of Augustine's response to the problem of evil in *De libero arbitrio,* Gillian Rosemary Evan's discussion should also be consulted in *Augustine on Evil* (Cambridge: Cambridge Unviersity Press, 1982), 112–18.

tence. Recall also that the leading question of the whole dialogue (whether God is responsible for evil) already presupposes God's existence.[61] Why, then, does Augustine devote himself to a question that Evodius has not asked?

The first clue is to be found in Augustine's definition of God. Augustine affirms Evodius's definition of God as "that to which nothing is superior" *(quo est nullus superior)*.[62] This formal definition specifies not properties but a relation. Whatever God is, he is *greater than* anything else that can be conceived. Like St. Anselm's later ontological argument, Augustine's proof unfolds less like a syllogism than like a series of contemplative observations. Coming to know God is the result of learning to pay attention. It is more like listening for an underground brook than calculating the volume of water that gushes from a spring. The context offers yet another clue. At one point Augustine asks Evodius whether the permanent rules of wisdom that they have discovered (e.g., that truth does not alter by being known by multiple minds) are above, equal, or inferior to human minds.[63] These truths are above us. They are above in the sense that our judgments take these into account as axiomatic starting points; they are fixed standards. By them we can make relative comparisons such as "better" and "worse." So, when we render judgments about things inferior to us, such as material objects, we make these judgments *about* objects. This is not the only way such eternal

61. Indeed, in this dialogue as in numerous other instances within the traditions of Western philosophy and religion, we can observe how the cluster of questions that comprise the "problem of evil" arise out of a distinctively theological and monotheistic cosmology: take away belief in a perfectly good, perfectly powerful God, and the so-called problem of evil disappears. See further, Marilyn McCord Adams, *Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999).

62. "For what I call God is not that to which my reason is inferior, but that to which nothing is superior" (Non enim mihi placet deum appellare quo mea ratio est inferior, sed quo est nullus superior) (*lib. arb.* 2.6.54; CCL 29.246).

63. *lib. arb.* 2.12.133–36.

truths are of use. We can also judge *in accordance with* such principles. We do this whenever we judge that something ought to be one way over another. We might think of it this way. By what capacity do we say that 7 plus 3 equals 10? Augustine thinks it is only by applying eternal principles to problems like this that we can derive the right sum. Problems in ethics likewise can be resolved (much of the time) by appeal to such standards. We do not invent the rules of quantification; we simply apply them to mathematical problems. In making judgments in accordance with such unchanging rules and patterns of rationality we need to be conscious that "we are not like examiners who correct, but like explorers who rejoice" *(non examinator corrigit, sed tantum laetatur inuentor).*[64]

How do these clues help untangle our riddle? Augustine's definition of God and his identification of the first principles of moral judgments make intelligible why he has invested so much time solving a problem that Evodius did not raise. The proof that God exists is designed, I think, to make it clear that God's existence is presupposed by our capacity to question how things ought to be.[65] To draw out Augustine's reasoning: the mind can question whether God should have created free will; it can ask such a question only because it is illuminated by eternal principles that make relative comparisons (of better or worse action) possible; these principles in turn are expressions of the divine mind; hence, the existence of God provides the logical possibility upon which questions such as "whether it is better that we have free will" are conceivable. Even to doubt God presupposes some knowledge of him. This is one way that Augustine undermines the moral objection to God's creating a will that is capable of evil. To complain against God is to complain

64. *lib. arb.* 2.12.134; CCL 29.260.

65. I am indebted here to Harrison's discussion in *Augustine's Way into the Will,* at 52.

against the one that makes possible the conditions of complaint, and is, at least in this sense, absurd.

Augustine's ontological proof—if that indeed is the best description—invites much more exploration. Augustine's proof for God furnishes another instance of how the mind can move from creation to creator. It is one more instance of how the final purpose of liberal education is fulfilled through a divine ascent.

For the young Augustine, is education every independent of authority? Clearly, it is not. Augustine has led us through a the threefold movement to God: from (1) reflection upon the psychology of action, to (2) the classification of the possible objects of love's aspiration, to (3) an appreciation of the metaphysical preconditions that allow for human judgments. Each topic is an open door through which the mind begins its search for God; each indicates a way for us to move from faith to understanding, from childhood to maturity. As in the study of the liberal disciplines, by considering God's creation of the rational mind we can come to a partial, though true, understanding of God's law and providential ordering for the universe.

Lex aeterna as Educator of Reason

Augustine's confidence in our ability to move from creature to creator relies upon both his distinctive conception of evil and his view of reason's perspicacity. At the period of his writing *De libero arbitrio* Augustine was occupied with refuting the heresies of the Manichees, and in particular their view of evil as a self-subsisting substance. Understanding this context helps us to appreciate why he shaped his discussion in the way that he did. How to vindicate God's goodness in the face of evil? The purported paradox of the problem of evil (then as now) balanced upon three legs: divine goodness, divine omnipotence, and the presence of evil. If God is all-good, he would not want his creatures to suffer evil; but crea-

tures do suffer evil, so God must be good but not all-powerful. Conversely, if God is all-powerful, and his creatures suffer, he must not be all-good. Either way the chair stands. The dilemma appears intractable. The Manichees tackled the paradox by stealing one of its legs. If God is no longer omnipotent then there is no need to save him from censure: he has done nothing deserving our blame. Two principles are at war. Evil is simply a force to be reckoned with. Against this gnostic vision Augustine counters, of course, that evil is not a good but a corruption of a substance already there. And if it is a substance God created it: if God created it, it is good; hence, every substance is good.

From Augustine's discussion of eternal law (seen against the background of Manichean dualism) I think we can draw three consequences for his theory of education. First, his rejection of metaphysical dualism brings with it the corresponding (and urgent) liability of having to provide a moral justification for the cause of evil. Although this does not become immediately relevant in Augustine's earlier writings, by shifting the focus of responsibility from divine to human agency, Augustine begins to undermine what is sometimes regarded as one of the primary motives for education: belief in the potential for independent self-improvement. In later texts (e.g., in the *Confessions* and *De doctrina Christiana*) Augustine emphasizes much more our need for God's power to help us overcome the effects of sin. In Augustine's view, the more that you move the locus of evil inward the less confidence we can have in our own resources and the less certain becomes psychological and moral progress. With a growing awareness of the depravity of man, and our need for God's grace, the value of a liberal education becomes less immediately recognizable—at least, that is, outside of an explicitly sacramental framework. I do not say unintelligible: it is only that one's own perfection is less and less within one's own grasp. Secondly, repudiation of the Manichean degradation of mat-

ter brings a corresponding benefit. If matter is good, reason and human imagination have a wider scope of activity than would have hitherto been allowed. Far from hindering our ascent, creation and our bodily senses can serve as the ladder of reason's ascent. Creation appears to the young Augustine as an interlocking network of signs that point to the creator. Finally, if conscience acts as an internal principle, so law serves *as an external norm*. Law is an external norm in these senses and with the following consequences: on the one hand, we arrive at knowledge of this law by a dynamic and reflexive process whereby reason moves both *inward* to contemplate the conditions of its own thought, and in doing so is drawn *upward* to a vision of God that exists above the mind in a preeminent way. On the other hand, in his polemic against the Manichee answer to the problem of evil Augustine provides a vindication of created natures. In Augustine's understanding of liberal education, reason must take into account multiple sources of authority as it travels from ignorance to enlightenment, from faith to understanding.

Our final section draws the above within the framework of Augustine's early Christology. As I hope to show, Augustine's identification of Christ as the *disciplina dei* goes some way to justifying how the arts are capable of bringing the soul to God.

Christ as *Disciplina dei*

In the classical and patristic periods "disciplina" had a range of applications, moral and intellectual. Tacitus refers to the Roman military as "*militia disciplinaque nostra*" (Tac. *Ann.* 3.42.1),[66] Caesar attributes Rome's greatness to the *disciplina populi Romani* (Caes. *Gall.* 6.1.4),[67] and Cicero, a well-ordered household to *domestica*

66. See Yann Le Bohec's "disciplina militaris," in Hubert Cancik, Helmuth Schneider, and Christine F. Salazar, eds., *New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 537–39.

67. The text reads: "quid populi Romani disciplina atque opes possent"; for

disciplina (Cic. *Tusc.* 2.27):[68] *disciplina* as military order, as political virtue, as household pattern. These examples point to the range of the term's signification in its secondary sense, as moral obedience or practical virtue. Its primary signification refers to a theoretical science or method of study.[69] It is in this second sense that Augustine most often uses the term in his early writings, particularly in the context of his theory of the liberal arts.

Where some scholars are dismissive of Augustine's early attempt to structure a unified Christian liberal arts curriculum,[70] Augustine's adoption of the concept "disciplina" into a Christological structure points to how we might plausibly complete some of Augustine's unfinished theoretical work. My claim here is that, understood correctly, Augustine's identification of the Son as the

---

further examples, see *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae,* "disciplina," 5.1 col. 1323 (Leipzig, 1900–).

68. In this text he refers to the negative consequences that follow from "malam domesticam disciplinam"; cf. *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae,* "domesticus," 5.1 col. 1865–77. See Jean Leclercq's entry "disciplina" in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* (Paris, 1954) and Marrou's "'*Doctrina*' et '*Disciplina*'," in "La langue des Pères de l'Église," *Bulletin du cange,* 9 (1934): 5–9, for introductions to the term's classical background and Christian adaptation; see also Wolfgang Hübner's entry "disciplina" in AugLex 2, no. 3, 457–63.

69. As Leclercq wrote at the beginning of his article on "disciplina" (p. 1291): "Dérivé de discipulus, le mot disciplina, voisin et parfois synonyme de doctrina, revêt primitivement la signification générale d'enseignement; il désigne bientôt la matière enseignée, puis la manière d'enseigner, donc l'éducation, la formation, comme *paideia*."

70. In his *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography,* 2nd ed., 256–66, for example, Brown assumes the *De doctrina Christiana* wholly supplants Augustine's earlier writings on the liberal arts; Frederick Van Fleteren considers that the venture was, from the start, an "impossibility" in "Augustine, Neoplatonism, and the Liberal Arts," 14–24, in *De Doctrina Christiana: A Classic of Western Culture* (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), at 19; more recently, Neil McLynn, in "Disciplines of Discipleship in Late Antique Education: Augustine and Gregory Nazianzen" in AD, 25–48, is content to see these early educational texts as "an exhibition"—an act of self-definition more important for its effect than its substance.

"disciplina dei" clarifies, in two important senses, how the Incarnation shapes Augustine's understanding of the process by which the arts can lead the student to God. In the first sense the Incarnation necessitates a Christological reordering of the end to which the disciplines themselves lead; in the second, it clarifies the subjective conditions under which the liberal arts are to be studied. To argue for and explain these propositions we first look at what Augustine takes a *disciplina* to be and then how the identification of the Son as the *disciplina* of God suggests how studying the arts, in an Augustinian way, could help a student advance "by mediation of corporeal realities to incorporeal ones" (*retr.* 1.3).

As already noted, in his early educational writings Augustine understands *disciplina* primarily in its intellectual signification. Once in 386 and again in a homily about fourteen years later, Augustine explained the etymological origin of *disciplina* in exactly the same terms: "disciplina enim a discendo dicta est," *disciplina* derives its sense from *discendo* (learning).[71] Beginning with etymology Augustine invests the term with ontological significance as, for example, in the *De ordine,* where, defending our belief in providence, he links *disciplina* to that other highly charged concept, *ordo.* As others have observed, within Augustine's discussion in the *De ordine* there is a threefold movement of the use of the concept *ordo.* From the attempt to capture a descriptive account of the phenomenology of a law-governed universe, common to Cicero and the Stoics, the attempt is then made:

> to rise above *ordo* in the merely descriptive sense of the disposition of finite occurrences to the original *ordo* in the divine mind…finally it is discovered that if one is to grasp this original *ordo* it is necessary to follow still another *ordo,* that of the liberal disciplines.[72]

71. Cf. *sol.* 2.20, CSEL 89.71; *disc. Chr.* 1.1, CCL 46.207.
72. Cf. TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian,* 78.

From phenomenological description of lawlike patterns, to the divine mind, to the method of human return, Augustine defines *ordo* as "that whose observance in life leads to God" (*ord.* 1.9.27).[73] Here, then, is how the liberal disciplines serve to draw us to knowledge of God: where *ordo* in this second sense signifies the pattern of God's government for the world, *disciplina* is the means by which we come to recognize order (intellectually) so that we may conform our lives (volitionally and emotionally) to that divine structure for creation.[74] It is by *disciplina* that we participate in and return to a knowledge of the *ordo* of the universe and of God's mind. Ontologically, *disciplina* is the very law of God "written into the souls of the wise"; how it functions within a theory of education is to prescribe "a twofold pattern, one for the conduct of life, the other for the sequence of study."[75]

Pattern of life and pattern for study: let us take up both aspects of *disciplina.* When Augustine speaks of *disciplina* as a pattern for life he has specific behaviors and dispositions in mind: the student of the liberal arts must avoid gluttony, vanity, silly games, and sleeping in (*ord.* 2.14.25). The intellectual apprehension of reality (especially immaterial reality) requires more than cognitive virtue.

73. "Ordo est, quem si tenuerimus in uita, perducet ad deum, et quem nisi tenuerimus in uita, non perueniemus ad deum" (*ord.* 1.9.27; CCL 29.102). Cf. Serge Lancel's *St. Augustine,* trans. Antonia Nevill (London: SCM Press, 2002), 405, and Shinji Kayama's "From ordo to pax: The Formation of a Central Political Concept in Augustine," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oxford, 1997.

74. As du Roy comments: "in the majority of cases the word 'order' is charged, in this dialogue, with a robust sense: Order, like Reason, is often divinized and even personalized" (dans la majorité des cas le mot 'ordre' est chargé, dans ce dialogue, d'un sens fort: l'Ordre, comme la Raison, est souvent divinisé et même personalisé); see *L'intelligence de la foi en la trinité selon Saint Augustin,* 135.

75. "Haec autem disciplina ipsa dei lex est. . . . Haec igitur disciplina eis, qui illam nosse desiderant, simul geminum ordinem sequi iubet, cuius una pars uitae, altera eruditionis est" (*ord.* 2.25; CCL 29.121; and for a parallel where *ordo* is used as a synonym for *disciplina* in the sense above, see *ord.* 2.18.47; cf. TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian,* 78).

However we divide the activities of intellect and will, they are productions of one and the same mind.[76] In order to perceive intelligible and spiritual objects, which are wholly responsive to the ordering of the good, we need to cultivate a likeness to them. In other words, we too must become responsive to the good: being trapped by inordinate desires renders the seeker incapable of apprehending the true order of being because it exacerbates the dissimilarity between object and perceiving subject.

In its speculative aspect, as a pattern of study, Augustine refers to *disciplina* both (1) as a body of knowledge and (2) as what we command insofar as we are intelligent creatures in possession of knowledge. To the one side, *disciplina* is a coherent organization of knowledge pertaining to a circumscribed subject. Thus, in the *Soliloquia* (2.11.20) Augustine enumerates a series of subjects, which he claims all belong to the one set of *disciplinarum.* Revealingly, particular truths discoverable in the subject of, let us say, grammar, are true by virtue of grammar's being a genuine *disciplina*—in other words, a bona fide science.[77] His claim: "omnis ergo vera est disci-

76. Jansenistic interpretations of St. Augustine hold that Augustine believed emotion to be separate from will. Controversy over this way of interpreting Augustine's view of psychology has been made manifest in several forms: besides the disagreement surrounding Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638) and his *Augustinus* one can point both to the later seventeenth-century debate between François Fénélon and Bossuet over "pure love" and to the twentieth-century debate over Andres Nygren's *Eros and Agape* as essentially reworking debates over the same theme, with variations. Peter Burnell has argued that we can infer how, for Augustine, will and intellect are, in fact, "one faculty and are each the entire mind" (61). Against that class of modern interpreters (including readers as diverse as Gilbert Ryle and Alasdair MacIntyre) who continue to attribute to Augustine a conception of the will as naked and *prior* to intellect in ontology, Burnell concludes his exegesis with this: "Internal mental oppositions notwithstanding, then, Augustine does not ultimately take the view that there are distinct operations of will, emotion, and intellect in the human mind. The notion of a pure, isolable will attributed with disapproval by Ryle, with approval by the Jansenists, is not in fact his view of the matter"; see *The Augustinian Person,* 61–62 (cf. Topping, "Review of Peter Burnell's *The Augustinian Person,*" *New Blackfriars* 88 [August 2007]: 627–29).

77. Cf. *ord.* 2.13.38–14.41 and *imm. an.* 1.1.

plina" (every *disciplina* is true) means a discipline is true *because* it comprises simply existent, non-material, and therefore intelligible, objects.[78] To the other side, *disciplina* can also refer more directly to the epistemological status of our apprehension of knowledge. Augustine refers to *disciplina* in this sense particularly when discussing proofs for the existence of the immortality of the soul.[79] In a terse passage of the *Soliloquia* he argues:

> If everything which is in the subject always remains, the subject itself would of necessity also remain. And every *disciplina* in the subject is in the soul. Therefore, by necessity the soul would always remain if the *disciplina* always remains. For *disciplina* is truth and truth, as reason convinced us of this in the first book, always remains. Therefore the soul always remains in existence; nor is the soul ever said to be dead.[80]

We can have permanent knowledge of things because *disciplina* resides in our minds. In this text *disciplina* is thus both a capacity and a description. It is a capacity making possible the mind's grasp of truth; it is a description insofar as it designates which aspect of the mind is (ontologically) responsible for causing other features. Put simply, since *disciplina* and truth are permanent, and these both exist in the mind, so must the mind be permanent.[81]

78. Cf. *sol.* 2.20; CSEL 89.71; this is also the way that Augustine refers to the system of Catholic doctrine as a whole, cf. *mor.* 1.27. But there can be pretenders: when polemically engaging Porphyry Augustine will call theurgy a pseudodiscipline, *civ. Dei.* 10.10.27; cf. *ep.* 101.2–3 and *conf.* 4.1.

79. Arguing against the Manichees, in *De immortalitate animae* Augustine asserts that *disciplina* exists wherever there is knowledge of things (*imm. an* 1.1; CSEL 89.101).

80. "Omne, quod in subiecto est, si semper manet, ipsum etiam subiectum maneat semper necesse est. Et omnis in subiecto est animo disciplina. Necesse est igitur semper animus maneat, si semper manet disciplina. Est autem disciplina veritas et semper, ut in initio libri huius ratio persuasit, veritas manet. Semper igitur animus manet nec <umquam> animus mortuus dicitur" (*sol.* 2.13.24; CSEL 89.79).

81. The argument depends, of course, on the crucial premise: everything which is in a subject always remains (Omne, quod in subiecto est, si semper manet …). Unadorned, such a claim requires further substantiation, especially where many contemporary philosophers of mind find unconvincing even the notion of a mental substance. At this point du Roy's comment is salient: "at the heart of the

Before we turn to the primary text where Augustine names Christ as the *disciplina dei* I want to consider the objection that, by pointing to this term, we will have laid too much emphasis on a single instance. Certainly, we should rest more securely in our judgments if we could point to a set of terms uniformly applied and consistently argued. We do not find this in Augustine's use of *disciplina*. Nonetheless, in defense of these efforts, and before moving to my conclusion, three considerations should be kept in view. First, our aim here is not exclusively historical: I seek not an exhaustive description of Augustine's early Christology but to point out that his adoption of "disciplina" suggests how we might plausible complete some of his unfinished work. Second, if Augustine's early epistemology is experimental, his Christology is uneven. While it is helpful to remember that Augustine's early Christology developed in response not to later canons of orthodoxy but to the questions of his own day, and equally, that we can be confident of the fundamentally pro-Nicene shape of Augustine's early Trinitarian theology,[82] still, his Christology is underdeveloped. His terminology lacks systematic precision. Context is therefore all important. When Augustine uses *disciplina* we have to reflect upon whether he

Soliloquia and *De immortalitate animae,* the relation of the soul to truth and to the Truth appears little by little: it is a relationship essentially contemplative and consequently ascending; it tends to become also a relationship of dependence" (c'est qu'au cours des Soliloques et du De immortalitate animae, la relation de l'âme au vrai et à la Vérité s'infléchit peu à peu: d'une relation essentiellement contemplative et donc ascendante, elle tend à devenir aussi une relation de dépendance) ; see *L'intelligence de la foi en la trinité selon Saint Augustin,* 179. Augustine has been preparing the ground: relying upon Aristotelian and Neoplatonic categories, an evaluation of the philosophical cogency of these claims about the relation between the mind (as substance) and *disciplina* would have to take into account these prior discussions (of at least those texts cited by du Roy, 178 n.2).

82. Useful background to the discussion of Augustine's Christology is given by TeSelle in *Augustine the Theologian,* 146–56, and, more recently, in Ayers's article "The Cappadocians" in AE.

is speaking of the liberal arts, or the law of God, or Christ. Third, and perhaps most importantly, in evaluating the theological connotations of *disciplina* it is helpful to remember that the term finds itself among a small cluster of related terms. Augustine's use of *disciplina* has to be set within this larger web of terms predicated of and associated with Christ. Indeed, as others have shown, *ratio, veritas, numerus,* and *disciplina* are all terms Augustine will, at times, draw into Christological discussions.[83] To briefly illustrate: *ratio* (to take one term) can be employed both for human and divine reason, depending upon context. Along this line mention is made here of one recent study which convincingly establishes that, when *ratio* is identified as a particular divine hypostasis, Augustine is speaking not of the Spirit but of the Son of God.[84] Recall Augustine's long discussion on law in *De libero arbitrio* book 1. In the midst of a discussion on Christ he calls the Son of God the supreme *ratio* (*lib. arb.* 1.6.48). Now add to this the recollection that just months earlier (as we looked at above) *disciplina* was named the law of God (*ord.* 2.8.25), a description that could well be applied to the second hypostasis. We may put these together this way. Within his rather fluid terminology, and over the span of a few months, Augustine will speak in one place of *ratio* as Christ and in another of *disciplina* as the law of God. Thus, when we consider this vocabulary it seems inevitable that Augustine's Christology will be open to a wide range of interpretations—of which I offer but one suggestion.

The primary text where Augustine names Christ as *disciplina dei* comes in his *Epistula* 12 to Nebridius, written in 389. Evidently, Nebridius was displeased at Augustine's inability to keep pace with his flood of questions (Augustine has given only two replies to Nebridius's three letters)—which were all focused on the Incarnation

83. On this matter, see further TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian,* 116–23, 146–56, and Gerber's *The Spirit of Augustine's Early Theology,* 90–102.

84. See Gerber, *The Spirit of Augustine's Early Theology,* 90–102.

(cf. *ep.* 11.2) and, most immediately, upon why the Son and not the Father became man (*ep.* 12). Augustine's answer is telling. He refers Nebridius to their past discussions about Christ: "recall my [past] discussions," for then, as he promises, "you will easily understand."[85] In his previous letter Augustine had been addressing why the second hypostasis of the Trinity should have been made man over other its other members. At that place, when speaking of the Son's distinguishing features, Augustine had utilized *disciplina* to refer to the Son of God (*ep.* 11.4). Now, in his next letter Augustine draws upon St. Paul's great hymn to Christ in Philippians 2:6: "in sum," the son is the "disciplina et forma dei" by which all has been created.[86] The Son is the discipline (instruction, law, pattern?) and form of God. I am not sure it if is fair of Augustine to promise Nebridius that he will *easily* understand; still, the text is suggestive. To Nebridius's Christological questions *disciplina dei* is certainly one of Augustine's first summaries of Christology, an early attempt to capture within a single definite description what Christians believe about the Son of God.

To summarize the argument: we have seen two instances where Augustine directly identifies Christ with *disciplina*. In weighing the significance of these we should bear in mind that elsewhere Augustine has already invested *disciplina* with Christological associations, and that this unsystematic approach to his early Christology is evident in Augustine's use of other terms as well. Augustine's identification of the Son as *disciplina dei* might profitably lead us to consider to what degree and in what ways other early denotations of *disciplina* (e.g., as the law of God, as a body of knowledge) and related terms (such as *conscientia*) can be reinterpreted for our purposes. Augustine's adoption of "disciplina" as a key Christological

85. *ep*. 12.

86. "Quod ut hic breuiter attingam, disciplina ipsa et forma dei, per quam facta sunt omnia quae facta sunt, filius nuncupatur" (*ep*. 12; CCL 31.30).

concept sheds light on his theory of the liberal arts in two ways, and for the following reasons. First, naming Christ the *disciplina dei* necessitates a teleological reordering of the goal to which the subjects of the disciplines rationally lead. Compared to pagan and indeed earlier Christian descriptions of the liberal arts, Augustine has provided a more comprehensive account of the coherence that pertains among the disciplines. The disciplines have their origin in the mind of God. Studied correctly they can lead us back to him. Since Christ is creator, he is also the final cause and to this extent the primary condition of all intelligibility. Plant your feet anywhere on the web of learning—beginning with grammar, physics, or geometry, as you please—and you will end at Christ. Christ as *the disciplina dei,* as the source of all being and knowledge, is the terminus to which every intellectual discipline leads, if only we would follow it far enough. Second, naming Christ the *disciplina dei* clarifies also the subjective conditions under which those arts are to be studied because it is only by becoming like Christ, by becoming *connatural with* that highest principle which is also a person, that the student can attain to the completion to which each of the arts separately and collectively points.

Conclusion

Understanding Christ as the *disciplina* of God opens up a door to further enquiry into how the centrality of authority is reconcilable with Augustine's Platonic epistemology; it also goes some distance in justifying his confidence in the capacity of the arts to achieve the purposes he hopes they can fulfill. We have seen that in Augustine's pedagogy and in his epistemology the mind benefits from several types of authority. There are both internal and external principles which reason must take into account in its activity. These include human teachers, the Church, conscience, and the eternal law. Each of these depends upon the presence of Christ, the *discip-*

lina dei, the inner teacher, for their efficacy. Christ acts as both the immediate cause of the mind's illumination and through intervening authorities. Furthermore, by identifying Christ with *disciplina* we see how Augustine implies that the liberal disciplines *in some way* participate in Christ and have him as their object.

The concept of authority is central to Augustine's account of knowledge. We have seen how the sources of authority to which he appeals can be interpreted within the Christological framework outlined above. Our final task will be to draw together the insights of the previous chapters into a synthetic account of the purposes of liberal education.

CHAPTER 7

The Purposes of Liberal Education

WE BEGAN with Augustine's observation that just as no one lacking what he wants can be happy, so also not everyone who has what he wants is happy either. For Augustine, like Cicero, Plato, and Aristotle, moral philosophy is born of the double desire to know what good we should want and to know how best to obtain it. The early Latin and Greek fathers benefited immensely from the classical tradition of liberal education they inherited. And yet, as we discovered in our opening chapter, few attempts were made to relate that education to the goals embedded within Catholic theology. Augustine is the first Church father to enlist that tradition into the service of a distinctively Christian *paedeia.* His early writings on liberal education attempt to substantiate the bold claim that by an ordered sequence of contemplation the believer can move through the disciplines "from corporeal realities to incorporeal ones," up to the mind of God himself. In his earliest writings Augustine explicitly identified God with the supreme good and the knowledge and love of God as the proper cause of our happiness. Thus: while Augustine adopted the eudaimonism he found in Cicero's *Hortensius,* already by 386 he had learned how to adapt this to Christian ends. From the point of view of its highest aim, Augustine's liberal educa-

tion shares with his moral theology happiness as the final purpose of human activity.

If the purpose of study is beatitude, the matter is specified in the curriculum of the arts. As we saw in the *De ordine,* training in grammar, rhetoric, music, arithmetic, astronomy, and especially dialectic can aid the mind in its ascent to the first cause. Liberal education is valuable because it can raise us to God; the arts are the rungs on the ladder.

The arts contribute to human excellence in more specific ways as well. Beyond the final aim of happiness (achieved through the knowledge and love of God), our study of Augustine's pedagogy in chapter 5 identified further, immediate and proximate, purposes for education. Though happiness is the properly basic end, virtue is the first aim of Augustine's teaching. As we saw in his interaction with his students Licentius and Evodius, the acquisition of intellectual and moral habits such as humility, determination, patience, no less than curiosity, attentiveness, and dialectical virtuosity, are the first skills Augustine teaches. If Cassiciacum is a school, then Augustine's preferred pedagogy is Socratic. He prepares pupils for the independent discovery of truth. But independent discovery is not equivalent to an autonomous search. And here we come upon a tension in his thought. As I argued in chapters 5 and 6 Augustine's pedagogy joins together two potentially contrary ideas. He establishes both our need for authority and the priority of independent rational discovery. This paradox is summed up nicely in his descriptions of pious study and in his exegesis of Isaiah 7:9, *nisi credideritis non intellegetis*: without belief it is impossible to understand. Augustine does not set dialectic against authority. We are not free to ascribe to Augustine a merely "intellectualist" view of education. Much more than the intellect is involved. From the teacher's structuring of advantageous conditions, to our need for friendship, to the function of prayer, in Augustine's earliest educational theory

and practice independent discovery is the ideal that never factually renders authority obsolete. Indeed, the need for friendship and Christian community signals yet another purpose of Augustine's course of liberal learning, and an additional sense that education may be said to contribute to happiness. Since this enculturation, emphasized particularly at Cassiciacum, is less immediate and appears a more comprehensive purpose than the achievement of any one particular set of virtues, we named this Augustine's proximate purpose for education.

How do the liberal arts fit within Augustine's view of the good life? I conclude that liberal education contributes to the aim of Augustine's moral theology by adopting the same final purpose, happiness, as well as by establishing the cultivation of virtue and the formation of a Christian community as means accompanying and supporting that final goal. These secondary purposes are manifest in Augustine's curriculum, his pedagogy, and in his emphasis on authority as the proper condition of rational enquiry.

A secondary aim of our study has been to establish in what ways Augustine's writings on liberal education respond to the context out of which his moral theology developed. Against those who seem to dismiss Augustine's theory as incompatible with his later theology, or who ascribe self-serving psychological motivations for all or parts of his interest in education, we find that Augustine's theory of education springs from his early ethical reflection. Augustine's three purposes for liberal education, happiness, virtue, and community, are subjects that could equally be examined under the rubric of moral theology. As I argued in chapter 2, and elsewhere, features of Augustine's epistemology seem to have arisen as a consequence of his moral theology. First, in their object and method the liberal arts are an antidote to Ciceronian skepticism. Not only is Augustine willing to affirm the possibility of achieving certain knowledge of the object of happiness, he is also confident to as-

sert how God can be known through the study of the disciplines. Second, against the Manichean denigration of created natures, the liberal arts are an exercise in the ascent from creation to creator. The usefulness of the arts attest to the fundamental goodness of creation. The world is charged with the grandeur of God: education confirms that the poets sing truth. Third, contrary to both Mani and Cicero, Augustine elaborated a detailed account of the nature and value of authority in education as a rationally informed instrument of efficient causality. Belief and the act of trusting become a *means by which* understanding can arise in the soul. Belief is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for our knowledge of the past. Since fundamental metaphysical doctrines (e.g., that Jesus is the Incarnate Son of God) are grounded in scriptural attestations to history, Augustine argued that the full exercise of reason must also include reliance upon trustworthy authorities.

More broadly, such reflections throw light on pertinent doctrinal and historical questions. One debate we find ourselves in a position to contribute to is the long-standing question over the continuity or discontinuity between the younger and the older Augustine. In response to Carol Harrison we have shown that the textual record supports the consensus (supported, e.g., by Peter Brown and John Rist) that at certain moments the young Augustine did believe perfectibility of the soul to be possible before death. And yet, with her we also recognize that past discussions have often failed to acknowledge how Catholic the young Augustine was. At no time did he believe human beatitude achieveable in the manner of a Platonist philosopher; even at Cassiciacum Augustine recognized our need of grace. Another question is whether Augustine's pedagogical model was unique? Relative to other leading Christian teachers, Augustine's position is singular. By bringing historians of ancient education into dialogue with Augustinian scholars, I have tried to situate more securely Augustine's early educational thought

and practice in the cultural context of his time. We have discovered that while his method bears traces of traditional grammatical and rhetorical education, Augustine overwhelmingly identifies his program with the content, aims, and practices common among ancient philosophical schools. Augustine sits within this tradition even while he introduced Christian innovations. More than the Platonists, Augustine provided a nuanced discussion of the relation between reason and authority; he also taught and modeled how it is that prayer can aid philosophical introspection.

Here are a few more conclusions. We have gained some insight as to how Augustine thinks faith and reason unite. The *forma dei* causes knowledge indirectly by means of the mediation of authorities, like law, conscience, and even through friends and teachers. Christ as the *disciplina dei* is the source of all being and knowledge and the terminus to which every intellectual discipline leads. Yet Christ in his earthly life is also the tangible, visible, proof of the intellectual end to which the liberal arts strive. Christ's mediation provides a more direct means of grasping the truth about our highest good than can independent rational reflection. Mediation does not have a univocal application. A thorough study of these early texts points to how the one true Teacher utilizes both exterior and interior teachers, that there are both external and internal principles that guide the development of reason. What is Augustine's estimation of the skeptic? What does he think of those who would refuse all authority, even the authority of the mind and senses? Augustine addresses this directly in his first Christian dialogue, *Contra Academicos.* He does this not so much to expose the skeptic's faulty epistemology as to draw out the harmful consequences of his theory, to *ethics.* Augustine displays his characteristically Roman instinct. He argues that where skeptics are taken seriously (though the Academics did not take themselves seriously), skepticism leads to the collapse of virtue and the undoing of social harmony. Skep-

tics thought learning impossible. By stealing hope of reward they also undermined the condition of learning: the promise of progress. Against Cicero, Augustine's program of Christian education aims higher. It also gives us more reason to believe that the three purposes for education identified above can be achieved in practice.

Past ages have found Augustine's edifice a sturdy foundation. The present age may do so again. In our time reason, virtue, and piety are everywhere under siege. As in Augustine's day, we once more face eastward in the expectation of a long night ahead. For those who wait for spring, Augustine's work nurtures hope for what the mind and heart can achieve with learning and with faith.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Works by Augustine

De beata vita: CCL 29.65–85.

Contra Academicos: CCL 29.3–61.

Contra medacium: CSEL 41.469–528.

Confessiones: 3 volumes. Edited with commentary by James O'Donnell. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.

De animae quantitae: CSEL 89.131–231.

De civitate Dei: CCL 47.1–314, 48.321–866.

De dialectica: Translated with introduction and notes by B. Darrell Jackson, edited by Jan Pinborg. Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1975.

De disciplina Christiana: CCL 46.207–24.

De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus: CCL 44ª.11–249.

De doctrina Christiana: Edited with translation and introduction by R. P. H. Green. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Enarrationes in Psalmos: CCL 38.1–616.

Epistulae: CSEL 34/1.1–125.

De Genesi adversus Manicheos: PL 37.173–220.

De Genesi ad litteram: CSEL 28/1.3–435.

De immortalitate animae: CSEL 89.101–28.

De libero arbitrio: CCL 29.211–321.

De magistro: CCL 29.157–203.

De mendacio: CSEL 41.413–66.

De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum: CSEL 90.3–156.

De musica VI: Martin Jacobsson, *De musica liber VI: A Critical Edition with a Translation and an Introduction,* Studeia Latina Stockholmiensia 47. Stockholm, Sweden: Almquist & Wilksell International, 2002.

De ordine: CCL 29.89–137.
De sermo Domini in monte: CCL 35.1–188.
De utilitate credendi: CSEL 25/1.3–48.
De vera religione: CCL 32.187–260.
Retractationes: CCL 57.5–143.
Soliliquia: CSEL 89.3–98.

Classical and Patristic Works

Apuleius. *Apuleius: Rhetorical Works.* Translated by S. Harrison, J. Hilton, and V. Hunink. Edited by S. Harrison. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Aristotle. *Nichomachean Ethics.* 2nd ed. Translated by Terence Irwin. Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 1999.

Augustine. *Against the Academicians and The Teacher.* Translation and introduction by Peter King. Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 1995.

———. *Confessions.* Translated by Henry Chadwick. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

———. *De Doctrina Christiana.* Translated by R. P. H. Green. Oxford Early Christian Texts. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

———. *On Divine Providence and The Problem of Evil.* Translated by Robert Russell. The Fathers of the Church, vol. 5. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947–.

———. *St Augustine against the Academics.* Ancient Christian Writers, vol. 12. Translated with notes by John J. O'Meara. Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1951.

Basil. *The Letters of Saint Basil.* Translation and introduction by Roy Joseph Deferrari and Martin Rawson Patrick McGuire. Loeb Classical Library, vol. 270. London: William Heinemann, 1912.

Cicero. *M. Tulli Ciceronis Academica.* Edited with introduction by James S. Reid. London: Macmillan and Co., 1885.

———. *M. Tulli Ciceronis Hortensius.* Edidit commentario instruxit Albertus Grilli. Milan, Italy: Instituto Editoriale Cisalpino, 1962.

———. *Tusculan Disputations.* Translation by J. E. King. Loeb Classical Library, vol. 141. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1945.

Diogenes Laertius. *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers.* Translated by R. D. Hicks. Loeb Classical Library, vol. 184. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991.

Eunapius. *The Lives of the Sophists.* Translated by W. C. Wright. Loeb Classical Library, vol. 134. London: William Heinemann, 1932.

Isocrates. *On the Peace. Areopagiticus. Against the Sophists. Antidosis. Panathenaicus.* Translated by George Norlin. Loeb Classical Library, vol. 209. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929.

Jerome. *On Illustrious Men.* Translated by Thomas P. Halton. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1999.

———. *Select Letters.* Translated by F. A. Wright. Loeb Classical Library, vol. 262. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1933.

Justin Martyr. *Justin Martyr: Dialogue avec Tryphon.* Edition critique, vol.1. Introduction, edited, and translated by Philippe Bobichion. Fribourg: Academic Press, 2003.

Lactantius. *Of the Manner in Which the Persecutors Died.* Translated by William Flectcher. In Ante-Nicene Fathers of the Church, vol. 7. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1995.

———. *Lactantius: The Divine Institutes, Books 1–7.* Translated by Sr. Mary Francis McDonald. Fathers of the Church, vol. 49. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1964.

Marcobius. *Macrobius: The Saturnalia.* Translated with introduction and notes by Percival Vaughan Davies. New York: Columbia University Press, 1969.

Minucius Filix. *The Octavius of Minucius Felix.* Translation and introduction by J. H. Freese. London: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge [no date given].

Origen. *The Philocalia of Origen.* Rev. ed. Edited with introduction by J. A. Robinson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893.

Plato. *The Republic.* 2nd ed. Translation by Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 1991.

Plotinus. *Enneads and Porphyry's Life of Plotinus.* Translated by A. H. Armstrong. Loeb Classical Library, vol. 440. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Quintilian, Marcus Fabius. *Quintilian on Education: A Translation of Selected Passages from the Institutio Oratoria with an Introductory Essay.* Translated by William M. Smail. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938.

Seneca. *Epistles 66–92.* Translated by M. Gummere. Loeb Classical Library, vol. 76. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1920.

Sextus Empiricus. *Against the Professors.* Translated by R. G. Bury. Loeb Classical Library, vol. 382. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1949.

———. *The Skeptic Way: Outlines of Pyrrhonism.* Translated with an introduction and commentary by Benson Mates. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Tatian. *Tatian: Oratio ad Graecos.* Edited and translated by Molly Whittaker. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982.

Tertullian. *Tertullian's Treatise on the Incarnation.* Edited with introduction, translation, and commentary by Ernest Evans. London: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1956.

Vitruvius. *De Architectura.* Translated with commentary and illustrations by Thomas Noble Howe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Secondary Literature

Adams, Marilyn McCord. *Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999.

Allberry, Charles R. C., ed. and trans. *A Manichean Psalm-Book: Part II.* Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1938.

Armstrong, Arthur Hilary. *The Architecture of the Intelligible Universe in the Philosophy of Plotinus: An Analytic and Historical Study.* Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1967.

Arnold, Matthew. "Literature and Science" [1882]. In *The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, edited by R. H. Super, 10: 53–73. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974.

Athanassiadi-Fowden, Polymnia. *Julian and Hellenism: An Intellectual Biography.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981.

Atwill, Janet M. *Rhetoric Reclaimed: Aristotle and the Liberal Arts Tradition.* London: Cornell University Press, 1998.

Aurther, James, and Guy Nicholls. *John Henry Newman.* London: Continuum, 2007.

Ayres, Lewis. "The Cappadocians." In *Augustine through the Ages,* ed. A. Fitzgerald, O.S.B., 121–24. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1999.

Babcock, William. "Augustine's Interpretation of Romans (AD 394–396)." *Augustinian Studies* 10 (1979): 55–74.

Béné, Charles. *Érasme et saint Augustin ou influence de saint Augustin sur l'humanisme d'Érasme.* Geneva, Switzerland: Librarie Droz, 1969.

Blank, David L. *Sextus Empiricus: Against the Grammarians.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.

Bohec, Y. Le. "Disciplina militaris." In *New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World,* ed. Hubert Cancik, Helmuth Schneider, and Christine F. Salazar, vol. 4: 537–39. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

Bonner, Gerald. "Augustine's Conception of Deification." *Journal of Theological Studies* 37 (1986): 369–86.

Bonner, Stanely. *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977.

Bourke, Vernon J. "Voluntarism in Augustine's Ethico-Legal Thought." *Augustinian Studies* 1 (1970): 3–17.

Brachtendorf, Johannes. "The Decline of Dialectic in Augustine's Early Dialogues." *Studia Patristica* 37 (2001): 25–30.

Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography.* Rev. ed. London: Faber & Faber, 2000.

———. *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992.

Burnaby, John. *Amor Dei: A Study of the Religion of St. Augustine.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1938.

Burnell, Peter. *The Augustinian Person.* Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005.

Burns, James Patrick. *The Development of Augustine's Doctrine of Operative Grace.* Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1980.

Byrne, Brendan, S.J. *Romans.* Edited by Daniel J. Harrington, S.J. *Sacra Pagina,* vol. 6. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1996.

Cameron, Averil. *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991.

Carmichael, Liz. *Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love.* London: T & T Clark International, 2004.

Cary, Philip. *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

———. "What Licentius Learned: A Narrative Reading of the Cassiciacum Dialogues." *Augustinian Studies* 21, no. 1 (1998): 141–63.

Chroust, Anton-Hermann. "The Philosophy of Law of St. Augustine." *Philosophical Review* 53, no. 2 (March 1944): 195–202.

Clarke, Martin Lowther. *Higher Education in the Ancient World.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971.

Cohen, Carl, and Irving M. Copi. *Introduction to Logic.* 6th ed. New York: Macmillan, 1982.

Comès, Guistave. *La doctrine politique de Saint Augustin.* Paris: Plon, 1927.

Conybeare, Catherine. *The Irrational Augustine.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Courcelle, Pierre. *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin.* Paris: E. de Boccard, 1950.

———. *Les lettres grecques en occident: De Macrobe à Cassiodore.* 2nd ed. Paris: E. de Boccard, 1948.

Coyle, Kevin John. "What Did Augustine Know about Manichaeism?" In *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West* (Proceedings of the Fribourg-

Utrecht International Symposium of the International Association of Manichaean Studies), ed. Johannes van Oort, Otto Wermelinger, and Gregor Wurst, 43–56. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Cribiore, Raffaella. *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001.

———. *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007.

Crouzel, Henri. *Grégoire le Thaumaturge, remerciement à Origène. Lettre d'Origène à Grégoire.* Sources Chrétiennes, vol. 148. Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1969.

Cullman, Oscar. *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead: The Witness of the New Testament.* London: Epworth Press, 1958.

Curley, Augustine J. *Augustine's Critique of Skepticism: A Study of* Contra Academicos. New York: Peter Lang, 1996.

Curtis, S. J. and M. E. A. Boultwood. *A Short History of Educational Ideas.* 4th ed. London: University Tutorial Press, 1970.

Dales, Richard C. *Intellectual Life of Western Europe in the Middle Ages.* 2nd ed. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992.

Daniélou, Jean. *The Origins of Latin Christianity*, vol. 3 of *A History of Early Doctrine before the Council of Nicaea.* Translated by David Smith and John Austin Baker. Edited with a postscript by John Austin Baker. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1980.

D'Costa, Gavin. *Theology in the Public Square: Church, Academy and Nation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

De Palma Digeser, Elizabeth. *Lactantius and Rome: The Making of a Christian Empire.* London: Cornell University Press, 2000.

de Rijk, Lambertus Marie. "'Egkuklios paedeia': A Study of Its Original Meaning." *Vivarium* 3 (1965): 24–93.

du Roy, O. *L'intelligence de la foi en la trinité selon Saint Augustin: Genèse de sa théologie trinitaire jusqu'en 391.* Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1966.

Dewey, John. *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* [1916]. New York: Free Press, 1966.

———. "Philosophy of Education." *A Cyclopedia of Education.* Vol.4. Edited by Paul Monroe. New York: Macmillan, 1913.

———. *Reconstruction in Philosophy.* New York: Mentor Books, 1950.

DiLorenzo, Raymond D. "Ciceronianism and Augustine's Conception of Philosophy." *Augustinian Studies* 13 (1982): 171–76.

Dillon, John. "Philosophy as a Profession in Late Antiquity." In *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire,* ed. Simon

Swain and Mark Edwards, 401–87. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
———. *The Heirs of Plato: A Study of the Old Academy, 347–274 B.C.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
Dodaro, Robert. *Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of St. Augustine.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
———. "Ethics: Lying and War." In *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia,* ed. A. Fitzgerald, O.S.B., 328–29. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1999.
Doignon, Jean. "La 'praxis' de l'*admonitio* dans les Dialogues de Cassiciacum de saint Augustin." *Vetera Christianorum* 23 (1986): 21–37.
Droge, Aurthur J. *Homer or Moses? Early Christian Interpretation of the History of Culture.* Tubingen, Germany: Mohr, 1989.
Dubreucq, Eric. "Augustin et le skepticisme académicien." *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 86, no. 3 (1998): 335–65.
Edwards, Mark Julian. *Culture and Philosophy in the Age of Plotinus.* London: Duckworth, 2006.
———. *Origin against Plato.* Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate Press, 2002.
Foley, Michael. "Cicero, Augustine, and the Philosophical Roots of the Cassiciacum Dialogues." *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 45 (1999): 51–77.
———. "The 'De Ordine' of St. Augustine." Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston College, Boston, Mass., 1999.
Ford, Andrew. "Sophists without Rhetoric." In *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, ed. Yn Lee Too, 85–109. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
Fortin, Ernest L. "Hellenism and Christianity in Basil the Great's *Ad Adulescentes*." In *Neoplatonism and Early Christian Thought: Essays in Honor of A. H. Armstrong,* ed. Henry J. Blumenthal and Robert A. Markus, 189–203. London: Variorum Publications, 1981.
Fredouille, Jean-Claude. *Tertullian et la conversion de la culture antique.* Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1972.
Frend, William Hugh Clifford. *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965.
Fuhrer, Therese. *Augustin Contra Academicos: Vel de Academicis Bücher 2 und 3.* Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1997.
Gamble, Harry Y. *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts.* London: Yale University Press, 1995.
Gasparro, Guilia Sfameni. "Au coeur du dualisme Manichéen: La polémique augustinienne contre la notion de 'mutabilité' de Dieu dans le *Contra Secundinum*." In *Augustine and Manichaeism in the West,* ed. Johannes van Oort, Otto Wermelinger, and Gregor Wurst, 230–42. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001.

Gerber, Chad Tyler. "Review of Carol Harrison's *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology*." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 120–22.

———. *The Spirit of Augustine's Early Theology.* Burlington: Ashgate, 2012.

Gilson, E. *Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine.* Translated by L. E. M. Lynch. London: Victor Gollancz., 1961.

Goehring, James E. *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert.* Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1999.

Gould, Graham. "Recent Work on Monastic Origins: A Consideration of Questions Raised by Samuel Rubenson's *The Letters of St. Antony*." *Studia Patristica* 25 (1993): 405–16.

Green, R. P. H., trans and intro. *Augustine:* De Doctrina Christiana. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Grisworld, Charles L., ed. *Platonic Writings, Platonic Readings.* London: Routledge, 1988.

Guthrie, William Keith Chambers. *A History of Greek Philosophy, Vol. 6: Aristotle: An Encounter.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

———. *A History of Greek Philosophy, Vol. 4: Plato the Man and His Dialogues: Earlier Period.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Hadot, Ilsetraut. *Arts libéraux et philosophie dans la pensée antique.* Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1984.

———. *Arts libéraux et philosophie dans la pensée antique.* 2nd ed. Paris: J. Vrin, 2005.

Hadot, Pierre. *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault.* Translated by Michael Chase with an introduction by Arnold I. Davidson. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.

Hagendahl, Harold. *Augustine and the Latin Classics.* 2 vols. Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1967.

———. *Latin Fathers and the Classics: A Study on the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers*. Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1958.

Harl, Marguerite. *Origène Philocalie* 1–20. Sur Les Écritures, Sources chrétiennes, vol. 302. Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1983.

Harmless, William. *Desert Christians: An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Harris, William V. *Ancient Literacy.* London: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Harrison, Carol. *Christian Truth and Fractured Humanity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

———. *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology: An Argument for Continuity.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Harrison, Simon. *Augustine's Way into the Will: The Theological and Philosophi-*

cal Significance of De Libero Arbitrio. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Harrison, Stephan J. *Apuleius: A Latin Sophist.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Heine, Ronald H. "The Beginnings of Latin Christian Literature." In CHCL, ed. by L. Ayers, F. Young, and A. Louth, 131–41. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004,

Heßbrüggen-Walter, Stefan. "Augustine's Critique of Dialectic." In *Augustine and the Disciplines,* ed. Karla Pollmann and Mark Vessey, 184–205. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Holt, Laura. "Wisdom's Teacher: Augustine the Teacher at Cassiciacum." *Augustinian Studies* 29, no. 2 (1998): 47–61.

Holte, Ragnar. *Béatitude et sagesse: Saint Augustin et le problème de la fin de l'homme dans la philosophie ancienne.* Paris: Études Augustiniennnes, 1962.

Hornblower, Simon, and Antony Spawforth. "Epheboi." In *Oxford Classical Dictionary,* 3rd ed., ed. Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth, 527–28. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Howie, Gordon. *Educational Theory and Practice in St. Augustine.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969.

Hübner, W. "Disciplina." In *Augustinus-Lexikon,* ed. C. Mayer. Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1986, 457–63.

Hugh of St. Victor. *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor: A Medieval Guide to theArts.* Translated with introduction and notes by Jerome Taylor. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.

Hughes, Kevin L. "'The Arts Reputed Liberal': Augustine on the Perils of Liberal Education." In *Augustine and Liberal Education,* ed. Kim Paffenroth and Kevin L. Hughes, 95–110. Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate Press, 2000.

Inglebert, Hervé. *Interpretatio Christiana: Les mutations des savoirs (cosmographie, géographie, ethnographie, histoire) dans l'antiquité chretienne 30–630 aprés J.-C.* Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 2001.

Jaeger, W. *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia.* Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962.

John Paul II. *On Catholic Universities* [*Ex Corde Ecclesiae*]. Vatican City: Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 1990.

Jolivet, Régis. *Le problème du mal d'après Saint Augustin.* Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1936.

Kant, Immanuel. "An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?" In *Immanuel Kant: Practical Philosophy,* trans. and ed. Mary J. Gregor, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant,* general eds. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, 11–22. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Kaminsky, James S. "A Pre-History of Educational Philosophy in the US: 1861–1914." *Harvard Educational Review* 62, no. 2 (1992): 179–82.

Kayama, Shinji. "From Ordo to Pax: The Formation of a Central Political Concept in Augustine." Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oxford, Oxford, U.K., 1997.

Kelly, J. N. D. *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies.* London: Duckworth, 1975.

Kennedy, George A. *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times.* London: Croom Helm, 1980.

Kerr, Clark. *The Uses of the University.* 5th ed. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Kirk, Geoffrey Steven, John Earle Raven, and Malcolm Schofield. *The Presocratic Philosophers.* 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Kirwan, Christopher. *Augustine.* London: Routledge, 1989.

Knowles, David. *The Evolution of Medieval Thought.* 2nd ed. London: Longman, 1988.

Koterski, Joseph. "St. Augustine and the Moral Law." *Augustinian Studies* 11 (1980): 65–77.

La Croix, Richard R., ed. *Augustine on Music: An Interdisciplinary Collection of Essays.* Queenston, Ontario: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986.

Lacoste, Jean-Yves. "Philosophy." In *Encyclopaedia of Christian Theology,* ed. J.-Y. Lacoste, vol. 3. London: Routledge, 2005.

Lafferty, Maura K. "Translating Faith from Greek to Latin: *Romanitas* and *Christianitas* in Late 4th Century Rome and Milan." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11, no. 1 (2003): 21–62.

Lancel, Serge. *Saint Augustine.* Translated by Antonia Nevill. London: SCM Press, 2002.

Leclercq, J. "Disciplina." In *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique: Doctrine et histoire,* ed. Macel Viller, assisted by F. Cavallera and J. de Guibert, with others, 1291–302. Paris: G. Beauchesne, 1937–1995.

Liebeschuetz, John Hugo Wolfgang Gideon. *Decline and Change in Late Antiquity: Religion, Barbarians, and Their Historiography.* Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate Press, 2006.

Lienhard, Joseph. "Augustine on Dialectic: Defender and Defensive." *Studia Patristica* 33 (1997): 162–66.

Long, Anthony Arthur. *Hellenistic Philosophy.* London: Duckworth, 1974.

Lord, Carnes. *Education and Culture in the Political Thought of Aristotle.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982.

Lütcke, Karl-Heinrich. *"Auctoritas" bei Augustin.* Stutgart, Germany: W. Kohlhammer, 1968.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition.* South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990.

MacKendrick, Paul. *The Philosophical Books of Cicero.* London: Duckworth, 1989.

Madec, Goulven. *Saint Augustin et la philosophie: Notes critiques.* Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1996.

Machielsen, Iohannis. *CCL: Clavis Patristica Pseudepigraphorum Medii Aevi III: A: Artes Liberales.* Turnhout: Brepols, 2003.

Malatesta, Michele. "Dialectic." In *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia,* ed. A. Fitzgerald, O.S.B., 269–71. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1999.

Mandouze, A. *Saint Augustin: L'aventure de la raison et de la grace.* Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1968.

Marenbon, John. *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Markus, Robert A. *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine.* Rev. ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Marrou, Henri-Irénée. "'Doctrina' et 'Disciplina' dans la langue des pères de l'église." *Bulletin du Cange* 9 (1934): 5–25.

———. *History of Education in Antiquity*. Translated by George Lamb. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1956.

———. "Les arts libéraux dans l'antiquité classique." In *Arts libéraux et philosophie au moyen âge,* Actes du Quatrième Congrès International de Philosophie Médiévale, Université de Montréal, Montréal, Canada, 27 août–2 septembre 1967, 5–27. Montreal: Institut d'études Médiévales, 1969.

———. *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique.* 4th ed. Paris: Editions E. de Boccard, 1958.

Matthews, Garreth B. "Knowledge and Illumination." In *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine,* ed. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, 171–85. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Maurer, Christian. "Sunoida." In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,* original ed., trans. Gerhard Friedrich and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 7, 898–919. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1971.

Mayer, Cornelius. "Conscientia." In *Augustinus-Lexikon,* ed. C. Mayer, 1.1218–28. Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1986–.

McLynn, Neil. "Disciplines of Discipleship in Late Antique Education: Augustine and Gregory Nazianzen." In *Augustine and the Disciplines: From Cassiciacum to Confessions,* ed. Karla Pollmann and Mark Vessey, 25–48. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

McWilliam, Joanne, ed. *Augustine from Rhetor to Theologian.* Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1992.

———. "Cassiciacum Dialogues." In *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia,* ed. A. Fitzgerald, O.S.B., 135–43. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1999.

Merlan, Philip. "Plotinus and Magic." *Isis* 138 (1953): 341–48.

Mosher, David L. "The Argument of St. Augustine's *Contra Academicos.*" *Augustinian Studies* 29 (1981): 89–114.

Muir, James R. "Is Our History of Education Mostly Wrong? The Case of Isocrates." *Theory and Research in Education* 3, no. 2 (July 2005): 165–95.

Natali, Carl. "Schools and Sites of Learning." Translated by Catherine Porter and Jeannine Pucci in *Greek Thought: A Guide to Classical Knowledge,* ed. Jacques Brunschwig and Geoffrey E. R. Lloyd, 191–217. Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000.

Newman, John Henry. *The Idea of the University.* London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1923.

Nichols, Aidan, O.P. *Christendom Awake: On Re-Energising the Church in Culture.* Edinburgh: T &T Clark, 1999.

Norris, Richard J. "The Apologists." In *Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature,* ed. L. Ayers, F. Young, and A. Louth, 36–57. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

O'Connell, Robert J. *St Augustine's Early Theory of Man, A.D. 381–391.* Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968.

O'Daly, Gerard. "The Response to Skepticism and the Mechanisms of Cognition." In *Cambridge Companion to Augustine,* ed. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, 159–70. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

O'Donovan, Oliver. *Resurrection and Moral Order.* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1994.

———. *The Just War Revisited.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

———. *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine.* New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1980.

O'Meara, Dominic J. *Plotinus: An Introduction to the Eneads.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

———. *Porphyry's Philosophy from Oracles in Augustine.* Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1959.

———. "Saint Augustine's View of Authority and Reason in AD 386." *Irish Theological Quarterly* 18 (1951): 338–46.

Osborn, Eric. *Clement of Alexandria.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Oxford Latin Dictionary. 3rd ed. Edited by P. G. W. Glare. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.

Paconi, Virgilio. "Liberal Arts." In *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia,* ed. A. Fitzgerald, O.S.B., 492–94. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1999.

Pernot, Laurent. *Rhetoric in Antiquity.* Translated by William Edwards Higgins. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005.

Peters, R. S. *Ethics and Education* [1966]. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1970.

Pierce, Claude A. *Conscience in the New Testament.* London: SCM Press, 1955.

Popkin, Richard. *The History of Scepticism.* 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Powel, Jonathon G. F., ed. *Cicero the Philosopher: Twelve Papers.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

Price, Simon. "Latin Christian Apologists." In *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians,* ed. Mark Edwards, Martin Goodman, and Simon Price, 105–29. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Quinn, John M. *A Companion to the* Confessions *of St. Augustine.* New York: Peter Lang, 2002.

Rappe, Sara. "The New Math: How to Add and to Subtract Pagan Elements in Christian Education." In *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity,* ed. Yun Lee Too, 405–32. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Rist, John. *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

———. "Review of Carol Harrison's *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology*." *New Blackfriars* 87 (September 2006): 542–54.

Rousseau, Philip. *Basil of Caesarea.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994.

Runciman, Steven. *The Medieval Manichee: A Study of the Christian Dualist Heresy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1947.

Russell, Norman. *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Satterlee, Alan. *Ambrose of Milan's Method of Mystagogical Preaching.* Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2002.

Schlapbach, Karen. *Augustin Contra Academicos: Vel de Academicis Buch 1.* Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2003.

Schneewind, Jerome B. *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Scruton, Roger. *The Aesthetics of Music.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997.

Shanzer, Danuta R. "Augustine's Disciplines: *Silent diutius Musae Varronis*?" In *Augustine and the Disciplines: From Cassiciacum to Confessions,* ed. Karla Pollmann and Mark Vessey, 69–112. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Shaw, Gregory. *Theurgy and the Soul: The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus.* University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995.

Sider, Ronald. *Ancient Rhetoric and the Art of Tertullian.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971.

Simmons, Michael Bland. "Julian the Apostate." In *The Early Christian World,* ed. Paul Esler, 1253–55. London: Routledge, 2000.

Smith, Andrew. *Porphyry's Place in the Neoplatonic Tradition.* The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974.

Southern, R. W. *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970.

Stahl, William Harris. *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts.* Vol. 1. New York: Columbia University Press, 1971.

Steel, Catherine. *Roman Oratory.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Steppat, Michael Payne. *Die Schola von Cassiciacum: Augustins* "De Ordine." Bad Honsel: Bock & Herchen, 1980.

Stevenson, William R. Jr. *Christian Love and Just War: Moral Paradox and Political Life in St. Augustine and His Modern Interpreters.* Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1987.

TeSelle, E. *Augustine the Theologian.* London: Burns & Oats, 1970.

Testard, Maurice. *Saint Augustin et Cicéron.* Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1958.

Too, Yun Lee. *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity.* Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Topping, Ryan, "Review of Peter Burnell's *The Augustinian Person.*" *New Blackfriars* 88 (August 2007): 627–29.

———. *St. Augustine.* Continuum Library of Educational Thought. London: Continuum Press, 2010.

Van Fletern, Frederick. "Augustine, Neoplatonism, and the Liberal Arts." In De Doctrina Christiana: *A Classic of Western Culture,* ed. Duane W. H. Arnold and Pamela Bright, 14–24. South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995.

Verger, Jacques. "Patterns." In *Universities in the Middle Ages,* ed. Walter Rüegg, 1.35–74. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Vessey, Mark. "Jerome and Rufinus." In *Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature,* ed. L. Ayres, F. Young, and A. Louth, 318–27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

———. "The Demise of the Christian Writer in the Remaking of 'Late Antiquity': From H.-I. Marrou's Saint Augustine (1938) to Peter Brown's Holy Man (1983)." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6, no. 3 (1998): 377–411.

Vössing, Konrad. *Schule und Bildung im Nordafrika der Römischen Kaiserzeit.* Brussels: Latomus, 1997.

Waite, William G. *The Rhythm of Twelfth Century Polyphony: Its Theory and Practice.* New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1954.

Wallis, Richard T. *Neoplatonism.* London: Duckworth, 1972.

Ward, Benedicta, trans. *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection.* Kalamazoo, Wis.: Cistercian Publications, 1984.

Ward, Keith. "Why Theology Should Be Taught at Secular Universities." *Discourse* 4, no. 1 (2004–2005): 22–37.

Ward, Leo R. "Review of H. I. Marrou's *History of Education in Antiquity.*" *Review of Politics* 19, no. 3 (1957): 400–403.

Wawrykow, Joseph. "Reflections on the Place of the *De doctrina christiana* in High Scholastic Discussions of Theology." In *Reading and Wisdom: The* De doctrina christiana *of Augustine in the Middle Ages,* ed. Edward D. English, 95–125. South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995.

Wellburn, Andrew. *Mani, the Angel and the Column of Glory: An Anthology of Manichaean Texts.* Edinburgh: Floris Books, 1998.

West, Martin Litchfield. *Ancient Greek Music.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.

Wetzel, James. "Pleagius Anticipated: Grace and Election in Augustine's *Ad Simplicianum.*" In *Augustine from Rhetor to Theologian,* ed. Joanne McWilliam, 121–32. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1992.

Winn, Robert E. "The Moral and Intellectual Failure of Divine Inspiration in Augustine's *De Ordine.*" *Studia Patristica* 38 (2001): 342–47.

Wittkower, Rudolf. "The Arts in Western Europe: Italy." In *The New Cambridge Modern History: The Renaissance, vol. 1:1493–1520,* ed. George Richard Potter, 127–53. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957.

Williams, Boniface. *Ambrose.* London: Routledge, 1997.

Wood, Allen W. *Kant's Ethical Thought.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Young, Francis. "Classical Genres in Christian Guise; Christ Genres in Classical Guise." In *Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature,* ed. L. Ayers, F. Young, and A. Louth, 251–58. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

———. "Greek Apologists of the Second Century." In *Apologetics in the Roman Empire,* ed. Mark Ewards, Martin Goodman, Simon Price, and Christopher Rowlands, 81–104. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

INDEX

Abelard, Peter, 5
Academicians, 70, 96, 105–15, 117, 231
Ailios Theon, 32, 69
Ambrose, St., 42, 78, 90, 282; on Latin language, 46
Anselm, St., 212
Antiochus of Ascalon, 2
Apollinaris, 41, 42
Apopthegmata Patrum, 53
Apuleius, 31, 37
Aquinas, St. Thomas, 5
Arnobius, 43, 45
Aristotle, 5, 29, 104, 154, 227; Lyceum, 35–36; on music, 143; *Nichomachean Ethics,* 73; *Protrepticus,* 71, 80
Arsenius, Fr., 54, 55

Basil, St., 21, 57–59, 63–65
beauty, 80, 129, 136, 203
Bible (Scripture), 4, 10, 74, 85, 86, 148; as apex of study, 49; authority of, 181; defense of, 45, 46; and philosophy, 73; and secular literature, 56, 58–59, 65
Brown, Peter, 15n33, 157–58, 230

Capella, Martianus, 3, 31–32, 106n24
Cary, Philip, 129n6, 132n11, 196
Cassiciacum, 112, 116, 151, 190; as school, 129, 154–57, 228, 229, 230
Church: authority of, 77, 85, 88, 156, 191; Fathers of the, 16, 22, 227; as mediator of salvation, 169, 171, 182; relation to philosophy, 52, 164
Christ, Jesus: authority of, 5, 170; as *disciplina dei,* 186, 216–25
Cicero, 8, 15, 43; *Academica,* 97, 109; *De Natura Deorum,* 42; effect on Augustine, 67–68, 74–87, 91–94; 56; *Hortensius,* 34, 39, 68, 71, 72, 74, 75, 79–81, 85, 87, 91, 121, 227; and Jerome, 56
Clement of Alexandria, 20, 44, 45, 179n75
Confessiones (*Confessions*): Augustine's education, 22–25, 28, 31, 33, 39, 74, 81, 86; and the liberal disciplines, 131, 144; on prayer, 102, 104, 125; skepticism and religious knowledge, 90, 92, 111, 157, 181
conscientia, 186–98, 224. *See also* Paul
Contra Academicos (*Against the Academicians*), 95–125; on authority, 167–68; on conformism of skeptics, 121–23; definition of skepticism, 105–13; on dialectic, 138–40; and education, 121–25; and prayer, 100–103; refutation of skeptics, 115–20; social setting of, 69–73
curriculum, 126–48
Cyprian, St., 43, 45

De animae quantitae (*On the Greatness of the Soul*), 113–14, 131, 160, 164, 176, 199, 202
De beata vita (*On the Happy Life*), 67, 71, 75n22, 81n45
De civitate Dei (*City of God*), 85n50, 171n46, 179n73, 195n21, 197n23, 205n49, 221n78
De doctrina Christiana (*On Christian Doctrine*), 3–8, 12, 13; and Cicero 85n50; *latinitas,* 47; and the liberal disciplines, 96, 138–39, 217n70; use (*uti*) vs. enjoyment (*frui*), 203n45
De libero arbitrio (*On the Freedom of the Will*): God and evil, 206–14; on law, 199–205; *libido dominandi,* 77; and pedagogy, 174–77; on *ratio,* 223
De magistro (*On the Teacher*), 138, 151, 186, 196
De moribus ecclesiae catholicae (*On the Morals of the Catholic Church*), 77, 191, 221n78
De musica (*On Music*), 127, 141–48
De ordine (*On Order*), 128–41, 152–56, 168, 219, 223
De utilitate credendi (*On the Usefulness of Believing*), 88n55, 177n67, 180
De vera religione (*On True Religion*), 14, 17, 51, 62n2, 76, 149, 170, 171n45, 171n47, 178, 179, 204n47
Dewey, John, 6, 7, 173, 174, 183
Diocletian, 24, 51
Diognon, Jean, 71
Donatists, 164, 190
doubt. *See* skepticism
Dubreucq, Eric, 102

education: Christian critique of pagan, 48–57; Christian debt to pagan, 41–48; historians of ancient, 3–11, 22n6; institutional settings, 22–28; and Julian the Apostate, 19–20; pagan critiques of, 59–65; purposes defined, 227–32. *See also* liberal arts
eloquence, 28; Christian, 47
Epistulae (*Letters*), 110–12, 186, 216–25
Erasmus, 5
Eudaimonism, 73, 87, 131–34
Eunapius, 37
evil, 60, 62, 77, 93, 128, 164, 176, 199, 208, 210; and God, 74, 88, 175, 206, 211, 213–16
Evagrius Ponticus, 53, 54

Faith: and reason, 48–59, 150, 180–84; "seeking understanding," 176–80, 207
fideism, 180–84
Fortin, E. L., 64

Gilson, Etienne, 150, 166n36
grace, 8, 18, 77, 78, 163–66, 168, 181, 199; Augustine's early views on, 156–59; and limits of education, 215
Gregory of Nyssa, 42

Hadot, Ilsetraut, 10, 11
Hadot, Pierre, 71–72; philosophy as way of life, 40–41, 70, 106, 155
Hagendahl, Harold, 26n25, 31n40, 56n112, 75n22, 79, 84n47
Happiness: and the curriculum, 131–34; as final purpose of education, 8, 16, 40, 99, 103, 119–21; and materialism, 91, 92; and philosophy, 52, 65, 67, 71, 201–5; Plato's teaching on, 107
Harrison, Carol, 158–66
Henry of Ghent, 5
Homer, 4, 25, 26, 41, 49, 58, 65
Horace, 26
Howie, Gordon, 13n27, 174n53

Iamblichus, 34, 38, 174n53
illumination, 17, 181, 185, 187, 192, 195, 226
Isidore of Seville, 3
Isocrates, 2, 6n11, 27, 28

Jerome, St., 43, 53, 57, 69
John Paul II, Pope, 172n49, 188n9

Julian the Apostate, 19–21, 41, 42n75, 106n24, 179
Julian of Eclanum, 84, 138
Justin Martyr, 20, 44, 48

Kant, Immanuel, 152, 172–75, 183–84
Kirwan, Christopher, 119

Lactantius, 20n4, 31, 43, 45, 46n90, 50–52
law: and conscience, 189–90, 197; and *disciplina,* 186; and education 123, 142, 214–16; eternal law as authority, 198–204; known through creation, 205–14; and Lactantius, 46n90; natural law and music, 147n58
Libanius, 29, 30, 33
liberal arts (disciplines): 2, 131, 228; dialectic, 136–41; music, 141–48
liberal education (*egkyklios paidei*). *See* liberal arts
libido dominandi (lust for power), 77
love, 4–5; as motive for teaching, 17; order of, 202, 203, 211, 214; pure love, 220n76; unites us to God, 145, 162, 228; as virtue, 163, 166, 193; of wisdom, 68, 71, 80, 81, 171

Macrobius, 32
Mani/Manichees, 87–91, 164, 181, 191, 200, 203, 214–16
Markus, R. A., 204n47
Marrou, Henri, 2n2, 9–13, 22n6, 35n38, 131n10
Martianus Capella, 3, 31, 106n24
memory: in education, 32, 146
Minucius Felix, 42, 46n89
Monica, 68, 70, 72, 85, 152
monks. *See Apopthegmata Patrum*
Mosher, David L., 96

Newman, John Henry, 6
Numenius of Apama, 45

O'Connell, R. J., 152–53, 168–69, 171
O'Daly, Gerard, 119–20
O'Meara, J., 98n5, 132n11, 153n5, 160
Origen, 6, 30n4, 30, 42, 45, 49–50, 64n136

paideia, classical ideal of, 9, 19, 21, 27, 52
Paul, St., 18, 74, 145, 146; on Christ, 224; on conscience, 188–89, 193–94; and human perfection, 165–66
Pelagius, 164–65
Pépin, J., 138
Philo of Alexandria, 2, 40
Philo of Larissa, 2
Plato, 2, 4, 8, 28, 35, 38, 40, 45, 58, 67, 72, 76, 81, 93, 95n1, 100n10, 110; and Christian thought, 157, 159, 170, 179, 196, 231; on dialectic, 137n24; and epistemology 185–87; esoteric teaching, 110; on music, 142
Plutarch, 25
Porphyry, 3, 11, 37–38, 178, 221n78
Posidonius, 61
prayer, 55, 72, 97–105

Quintilian, 23n10, 25, 27, 29, 55

Rappe, Sarra, 60, 63
Retractiones (*Reconsiderations*), 111, 159, 164, 218
Romanitas, 46

schools, Greek and Roman, 22–41
Seneca, 60–62, 65
Sextus Empiricus, 25, 60–65, 107
signs, 4, 18, 83, 145, 186, 216
sin, 18, 67, 77, 124, 165, 193n16, 199, 201, 215
skepticism, 78–87, 95–125
Socrates, 35, 40, 73n18, 76–77, 106
Soliloquia (*Soliloquies*), 138, 185, 201n36, 221
soul: ascent through disciplines, 8, 17, 40, 59, 61, 86, 93, 128, 142, 144, 153,

soul: ascent through disciplines *(cont.)* 162, 186, 192, 198; immortality of, 58, 221; knowledge of, 72, 132n13, 133; and virtue, 90, 102, 125, 130, 160, 168, 230
Sozomen, 41, 42n75

teacher. *See* schools
Terence, 26
Tertullian, 43–46
Theophrastus, 36
truth: and authority, 183, 207, 228; and the disciplines, 138, 187, 220; and doubt, 16, 68, 74, 83, 97, 104, 108, 111, 118, 180; and happiness, 71, 99, 101, 123

Varro, 2, 3, 11, 76, 79, 84, 127n1
Vaughan, Frederick, 108
Vespasian, 24
Vessey, M., 11, 12n25, 43n81
Virgil, 4, 26, 32, 56, 69, 79, 85
virtue: and education, 41, 52, 60, 62, 104, 229; and happiness, 78, 82, 151, 228; kinds of, 61, 68, 75, 55, 114, 150, 154, 166, 184, 217, 220; and skepticism, 231

West, M. L., 143
wisdom: and happiness, 75, 80, 86, 92, 100; and the liberal arts, 29, 63, 98n5, 155; philosophy and, 49, 51, 81, 136n20, 175; unstudied, 54, 61

Xenocrates, 35

Zeno, 35–36, 40, 76, 82, 107, 108, 112, 115–17

Happiness and Wisdom: Augustine's Early Theology of Education was designed and typeset in Garamond by Kachergis Book Design of Pittsboro, North Carolina. It was printed on 60-pound House Natural Smooth and bound by Sheridan Books of Ann Arbor, Michigan.